

Bolivia:
cocaine and
campaigns

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The Sound and the fury



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North docudrama and paper chase

By Jim Naureckas

WASHINGTON, D.C.

With the jury sequestered, the trial of Lt. Col. Oliver North has only one more mystery left to disclose: whether the former National Security Council aide will be found guilty on some or all of the 12 charges stemming from his management of the Iran-contra operations.

While some of the counts against him are complicated, there is every reason to believe that he will be convicted on at least some of the charges. In his closing instructions, Judge Gerhard Gesell all but ordered the jury to disregard the bulk of North's defense—essentially, that in the lawless atmosphere of the Reagan administration North presumed he was expected to commit illegal acts.

But regardless of whether North is found guilty, the trial has been a success in correcting the official history of Contragate. Ironically, most of the revelations have not come from the prosecution's evidence against North, but from North's lawyer Brendan Sullivan's efforts to establish an "everyone was doing it" defense.

The most important document released was a 42-page summary of classified materials deemed too sensitive to admit in their entirety. While dealing only with the limited subject of U.S. solicitation of third-country aid for the contras, the paper is far more honest and far-reaching than the reports issued by President Reagan's Tower Commission and the congressional Iran-contra committee. While the executive branch established a pattern of damage control that the legislature was largely willing to follow, the judiciary adheres to more rigid standards of evidence.

A wink from George: The accuracy of the 42-page "admission" is acknowledged by both the prosecution and defense. Along with other trial evidence, the document shows that Reagan-era Nicaragua policy, far from being crafted in secret in the White House basement, was discussed in broad daylight in the Oval Office. Officials who had been treated as elder statesmen at the Iran-contra hearings are revealed as co-conspirators in the secret contra support operations.

Former Secretary of State George Shultz, for example, had a far deeper role than was previously believed. He is described in the admission as the author of a plan to allow Congress to "wink" at lethal support for the resistance by "provid[ing] military aid to El Salvador, which

in turn would provide lethal aid to the resistance." This was one of the first discussions of "quid pro quo" funding, where support for the contras was "bought" with U.S. aid.

The admission also says that Shultz was informed of quid pro quo deals involving Honduras and Guatemala, and that he played an active role in soliciting contra funding from Brunei and another Asian country that appears to be Japan.

In February 1986, eight months before Eugene Hasenfus was shot down over Nicaragua, Shultz was allegedly told that "at the request of the U.S. government, [El Salvador's] Ilopango military airport was being used to help the resistance," and he not only knew about a secret contra airbase in Costa Rica but urged that Costa Rican President Oscar Arias be ostracized by the White House for revealing its existence.

On the other hand, Panama's strongman, General Manuel Noriega, was more solicitously treated by the Reagan administration. Shultz, the admission reveals, approved a meeting between North and Noriega to discuss Noriega's offer to carry on sabotage inside Nicaragua in exchange for "a promise from the U.S. government to help clean up Noriega's image," tainted by allegations of drug smuggling.

The smoking Bush: The most sensational revelations concern George Bush's involvement with the quid pro quo negotiations when he was Reagan's vice president. The admission says that Bush met in March 1985 with Honduran President Roberto Suazo to tell him about a special aid package for Honduras.

While the admission does not say that Bush explicitly made the connection between the aid and the contras, Bush was apparently sent memos that described the deal. One trial exhibit, a letter saying Honduras should be rewarded for helping the contras "in order that our appreciation manifests itself in more than words," bears a handwritten note from Deputy National Security Adviser John Poindexter that reads: "Add that we want VP to also discuss this matter with Suazo."

While the Suazo approach has made the news, much less attention has been paid to a subsequent trip to Honduras that is far more incriminating. The admission describes talking points prepared by North in mid-January 1986 for a meeting among Bush, Poindexter and Suazo's successor, President Jose Azcona:

"North recommended that Admiral Poindexter and Vice President Bush tell President Azcona of the need for Honduras to work with the U.S. government on increasing regional involvement with and support for the resistance. Poindexter and Bush were also to raise the subject of better U.S. government support for the states bordering Nicaragua," i.e., Honduras and Costa Rica.

At the same time, the State Department sent a memo to Bush's national security adviser, Donald Gregg, about the vice president's upcoming meeting with Azcona. The memo, paraphrased in the admission, said that "one purpose of the meeting was to encourage continued Honduran support for the resistance. The memorandum alerted Gregg that Azcona would insist on receiving clear economic and military benefits from its cooperation with the U.S." Poindexter, the memo said, was to meet "privately" with Azcona "to seek a commitment of support for the resistance by Honduras."

This request seems to have violated the Pell Amendment, a law enacted in October 1985 to prevent U.S. officials from offering, "expressly or implicitly," economic or military aid as compensation for contra support. It also appears to contravene an amendment to the Boland Amendment in December 1985 that allowed the State Department alone to make non-quid pro quo requests for contra aid from third countries.

Bush has refused to comment on the North trial revelations, saying he didn't want to prejudice the case, even after the jury was sequestered. But the president may have a harder time avoiding an inquiry requested by Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-ME) into why many of the documents disclosed by North, including the memos relating to Bush and Honduras, were not turned over to the congressional Iran-contra probe.

Bush insists that the documents were "available," though this was true, at best, only in the most theoretical sense. The White House refused to allow the committee direct access to the 80 boxes of files left unshredded in North's office. Instead, the committee was told it would

only be given copies of the papers selected by FBI agents working for independent counsel Lawrence Walsh—about one-quarter of the total.

The committee and the independent counsel's office accepted this, though they agreed that it was inappropriate. "These were two separate investigations with different needs," Walsh's spokesman Jim Wieghart told *In These Times*.

But it appears that not even all the documents that went to Walsh went to the committee. Although former White House counsel Arthur Culvahouse told the *Washington Post* that the administration's rule was "whatever goes to Walsh goes to the Hill," other sources told the *Post* that the papers were "screened" before they were passed on to Congress.

Blanks for the memory: The White House gave the committee an "inventory"—described by committee co-counsel John Nields as imprecise and inadequate—of the remaining 60 boxes of documents. Congressional investigators were told they could select items from the inventory to be examined and paraphrased by someone from the National Archives.

Even this document "availability" was later withdrawn, according to Arthur Liman, the other co-counsel. Liman told the *Post* that when the committee asked for 50 files named on the inventory, Culvahouse said that the FBI had already searched the files twice and retrieved "anything that relates to its subject matter."

Mitchell revealed even more clear-cut proof of an administration cover-up on the April 23 edition of CBS' *Face the Nation*, saying that Sullivan's exhibits suggest that material had been quietly deleted from copies given to the committee. A handwritten note from Reagan that described a quid pro quo deal with Honduras was missing from one memo. Another quid pro quo memo lacked a notation, present on Sullivan's version, indicating that a copy had gone to Bush.

INSIDE STORY

The missing and edited documents could become a headache for Bush, just as the cover-up of the Watergate burglary proved more damaging to the Nixon White House than the break-in itself. But the most immediate fallout from the North trial is raining on Bush's ambassadorial nominees.

Ambassador-designate to Japan Michael Armacost was challenged at his confirmation hearing about the admission's charge that he attended an interagency meeting that discussed the quid pro quo deal with Honduras. While the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recommended Armacost for confirmation after he claimed he hadn't attended the meeting, two other nominees implicated by North trial evidence have had their votes delayed.

John Negroponte, former ambassador to Honduras and nominee to Mexico, was held up because of indications in the admission that he had conveyed the quid pro quo offer to Suazo. Donald Gregg, Bush's former security adviser, has had the hearing for his ambassadorship to South Korea delayed in part because of his connection to the Azcona quid pro quo. Sen. Alan Cranston (D-CA), the chair of the Asia subcommittee as well as the Democratic whip, asked Secretary of State James Baker to reconsider Gregg's nomination, an indication that the Democrat's chief nosecounter thinks there are enough votes to block Gregg.

The fight over Gregg, one of Bush's closest aides, could be as bitter as the Tower confirmation battle. And Bush has only more of the same to look forward to in the trial of Poindexter, who was closer to the top of the chain of command and could have even more explosive revelations. The defense is required to file its final request for discovery by May 15, and the trial should begin soon afterward under Judge Aubrey Robinson.

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By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON, D.C.

CONGRESS USED TO PASS MINIMUM-WAGE INCREASES with the same alacrity that it created tax loopholes for oil companies. Under both Democratic and Republican presidents, Congress voted major increases in the rate and scope of the minimum wage in 1949, 1955, 1961, 1966, 1974 and 1977.

But the current Congress has only been willing to pass the most modest increase in the minimum wage, and President George Bush, who vowed to back a minimum-wage increase during last fall's campaign, is now threatening to veto even that. He is insisting that Congress pass his plan, one that would effectively reduce the minimum wage.

Moreover, the president's opposition to the minimum wage is being echoed not only by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, but by liberal opinion-makers like the *New York Times* editorial board and *Washington Post* columnist Robert J. Samuelson. Congressional support for the minimum wage, Samuelson wrote, "is a depressing reminder of the staying power of old (and bad) ideas."

This burgeoning liberal opposition to the minimum wage suggests that what is occurring is a shift not merely in political power, but also in economic theory. American politicians and economists are turning their back on a model of economic growth and equity that had stood the country in good stead since World War II.

Reducing the minimum wage: The bills passed by the House and Senate this winter represent a compromise on a compromise. The original bill, sponsored by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Rep. Augustus Hawkins (D-CA), increased the minimum wage in three stages from \$3.35 an hour to \$4.65 an hour in 1992. The bill was dubbed the "Minimum Wage Restoration Act," because it was intended to restore the minimum wage to the value it would have had if the \$3.35 rate, adopted in 1981, had been indexed for inflation. But in fact the Kennedy-Hawkins proposal fell far short of that. To match the 1981 rate in real dollars, the minimum wage would have to be \$5.24 by 1992.

In the bills passed by the House and Senate, the original proposal was further watered down. The "increase" was reduced to \$4.55, and a two-month subminimum wage, totaling 85 percent of the minimum, was added for first-time workers. This effectively negates the minimum wage. For instance, according to an analysis by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a family of three that tries to live by the 1992 minimum wage will fall 16.4 percent below the official poverty line. Last year the estimated poverty line for a family of four was \$9,431 a year.

But the Democrats' bill was still too generous for the patrician Bush. His own proposal would increase the minimum wage to \$4.25 by 1992—or 22 percent below the poverty line. And employers could hire workers for a six-month training wage pegged at 80 percent of the minimum. Bush, reeling from the defeat of his nominee for defense secretary, former Sen. John Tower (R-TX), has vowed to veto any plan that offered "one penny" more than his own.

The president's proposal for a training wage is particularly ludicrous. No minimum-wage job requires six months' training. And Bush's bill places no restrictions on who can

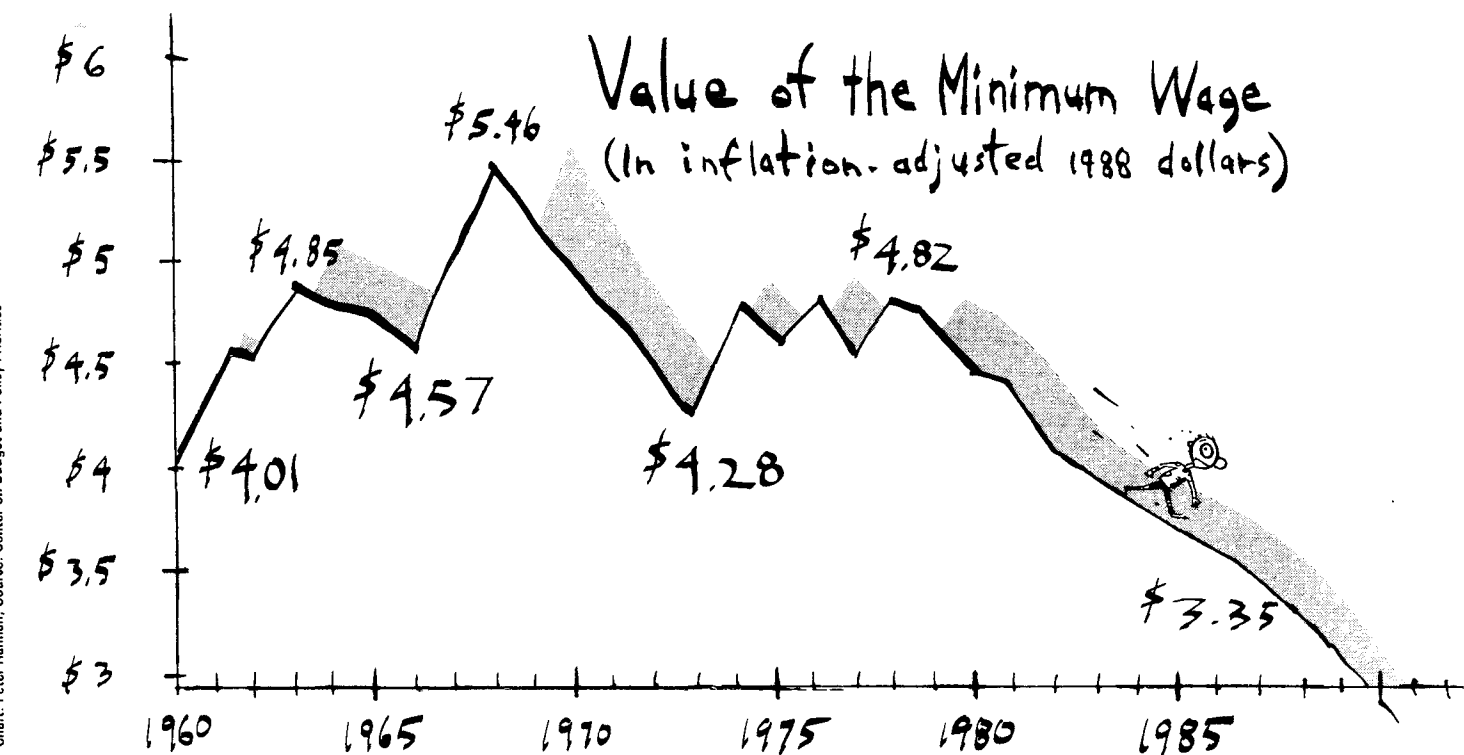


Chart: Peter Hannan; Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Bush's austerity wage stirs minimum rage

be hired at a training wage. Since many minimum-wage workers are employed seasonally or part-time, Bush's training wage could become the de facto minimum wage. This would create a net reduction in the minimum wage. In 1992, for instance, Bush's trainees would be receiving \$3.40 an hour, or \$2.97 an hour in current dollars.

Working poor: Politicians and policy-makers used to justify the minimum wage on grounds of both social justice and Keynesian economics. By placing a floor under wages, the minimum wage was supposed to prevent the kind of deflation and underconsumption that prolonged the Great Depression. Opponents of the minimum wage were led by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. In opposing any increases in the minimum wage, the Chamber of Commerce argued that increases would bankrupt small businesses, deprive the poor of jobs and drive up prices.

Experience has vindicated the claims of minimum-wage proponents: increases have not led to any discernible reduction in employment or price rises. But the Chamber's arguments against the minimum wage began to win adherents in the '70s. In 1977, when the minimum wage was increased from \$2.30 to \$3.35 over four years, the House came within a vote of passing a subminimum "youth wage" to protect teenagers from being thrown out of work by minimum-wage increases. After 1981, with the Reagan administration opposing any minimum-wage legislation and the labor movement losing its clout in Capitol Hill, congressional Democrats failed to pass any new legislation. The minimum wage stagnated at its 1981 level.

This year the Chamber's information packet against the minimum wage included *New York Times* editorials and Samuelson's columns. His columns largely rehashed the Chamber's position ("The more the minimum is raised, the worse the side effects") but added a new wrinkle: the minimum wage is no longer needed to prevent gross exploitation.

Samuelson points out that the number of

minimum-wage jobs has dropped 50 percent since 1981, nearly 60 percent are held by workers under age 25 and most by workers from households above the poverty line. "A few more years at \$3.35 and the natural upward drift of wages would make [the minimum wage] irrelevant," he argues.

His argument is internally contradictory. If the minimum wage is becoming economically irrelevant, raising it slightly will not have serious side effects. But Samuelson selectively interprets the official minimum-wage statistics. If one looks at who gets paid at or near the minimum wage (from \$3.35 to \$4.49), then almost half are older than age 25 and many are part of the working poor, whose ranks have swelled during the Reagan years. (According to a recent study, the number of employed people below the poverty line increased 23 percent between 1978 and 1987.)

Samuelson also ignores the effect of a steep recession on wage levels. The number of minimum-wage workers has declined during a period when employment in low-wage jobs has been increasing; in a recession, the minimum wage would once again become a significant floor on incomes—and the higher the minimum wage, the more significant the floor.

The *New York Times*'s arguments are even feeble. The *Times* suggests that Congress should use the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC, which provides a tax refund) rather than the minimum wage to bolster the incomes of the working poor, but the EITC proposals that the *Times* endorses would increase wages only 50 cents an hour, less than half what would be provided under the congressional minimum-wage bills.

Abandoning Keynes: But there is a kernel of truth to Samuelson's and the *Times*' arguments. While the moral argument for the minimum wage remains as strong as ever, the economic argument has been weakened. The Keynesian argument for the minimum wage assumed that, except during times of full employment, raising domestic demand would increase domestic produc-

tion and employment; unfavorable side effects created by raising the minimum wage would be more than offset by the increase in consumer demand. But this relationship between demand and wages, on the one hand, and jobs, on the other, has grown increasingly tenuous.

The Keynesian model, as applied in the U.S., assumed a largely self-contained economy that could resist economic pressures from abroad. But during the past four decades the U.S. has become part of an integrated and highly competitive world system. American firms are now vulnerable to low-wage or technologically advanced competition from abroad. Thus American firms have moved abroad to avoid wage increases at home, and when demand has gone up, as it did in the last Reagan years, the trade deficit has grown more rapidly than the employment rolls.

Given these changes in economic relationships, policy-makers and politicians have gone in either of two directions. They have either adopted the East Asian model of a low-wage, export-driven economy in which a premium is placed on reducing wages and increasing corporate savings, or they have veered beyond Keynesianism toward a more comprehensive model of industrial and trade policy.

The Bush administration, with the support of some leading Democrats, is clearly embracing a Japan-U.S.A. model. Under this model, corporations need greater tax relief, union wage demands must be beaten back and the deficit must be used as a club to reduce government spending on the poor and working classes. This model is very attractive to corporate managers and Wall Street financiers. But if it's successful, it could lead to even greater worldwide overcapacity—that is, to a surfeit of products and a scarcity of customers.

One could still argue that the new international imperatives do not affect minimum-wage increases. Most minimum-wage workers hold service jobs that are not threatened by foreign competition.

But Bush and his Democratic allies have so thoroughly absorbed the vision of a low-wage, high-savings America that even nugatory increases in the minimum wage now seem extravagant. They are going for broke, which is exactly how many Americans will end up.

By Joel Bleifuss

Nabbed before jumping ship

By calling for Adnan Khashoggi's extradition for helping Imelda and Ferdinand Marcos sell off their loot from the Philippines, the Bush administration has served the loquacious Saudi arms dealer a timely reminder that if he has a long memory, the U.S. government has a long arm. It appears the real reason for Khashoggi's April 18 arrest in Bern, Switzerland, was to warn him to shut up about the Iran-contra scandal. *Le Matin* of Geneva reports that the arrest was "nothing other than a clear message from the U.S. to one of the main witnesses to the Irangate scandal who privately was threatening to reveal the background of the affair—an affair whose eventual developments could tarnish the image of President Bush."

Wheeler-dealers: Khashoggi is reported to have bragged that he cooked up the arms deal with Iran. Though that boast has not been proven, it is known that Khashoggi and his American lawyer, Samuel Evans, were intimately involved in what they maintain were U.S.-approved arms sales to Iran. According to New York-based journalist Michael Finnegan, in the spring of 1985 Khashoggi, retired Israeli Gen. Abraham Bar'am, the late arms dealer Cyrus Hashemi, the Iranian arms dealer Manucher Ghorbanifar and several unknown Israelis held meetings in London, Geneva and Israel to plan arms sales to Iran. Attorney Evans has said in a court deposition that Hashemi and Khashoggi met in spring 1985 in Israel with then-Prime Minister Shimon Peres to discuss selling American arms to Iran via Israel. But a disagreement between Khashoggi and Hashemi caused that deal to collapse, and Hashemi was cut out of the action. Khashoggi, with the help of Ghorbanifar, went on to arrange and provide the initial financing for the August 1985 delivery of 504 U.S.-made TOW missiles to Iran via Israel. Later in November 1985 Khashoggi similarly helped ensure delivery of 18 Hawk anti-aircraft missiles from Israel to Iran on a CIA airplane. And in February 1986 he arranged for 1,000 additional TOW missiles to be sent to Iran.

A double deal: At the same time that Khashoggi, Ghorbanifar and their friends in the White House—Lt. Col. Oliver North and National Security Adviser John Poindexter—were dealing with Iran, another group of arms dealers, allegedly coordinated by Khashoggi lawyer Evans, were being set up in a U.S. Customs Service sting operation facilitated by Hashemi. (Evans and nine others were arrested on April 21, 1986.) Journalist Finnegan, citing a Senate source, reports that North and others in the administration were aware of the sting but had a "vested interest" in shutting down "elements of competition" in the U.S.-Iran arms trade. According to Customs Service transcripts of secretly taped conversations, Evans was convinced his Iranian arms sales were at the behest of the U.S. and had the full approval of then-Vice President Bush. In a conversation taped on Feb. 7, 1986, Evans told Hashemi: "The green light now finally has been given, that [Vice President George] Bush is in favor, [Secretary of State George] Shultz against, but nevertheless, they are willing to proceed." On a tape made later that day, John Delaroque—another arms dealer charged in the customs sting—told Hashemi, "My understanding is the following: [approval of the deal] will move from the vice president through the president.... Now it's as far up as it can go. And the man that has it now says it is good. You know who he is. He used to be the head of the CIA, so he knows what he's doing."

Stockholder democracy

This year stockholders from around the country will attend the annual meetings of 142 corporations armed with more than 214 resolutions that deal with social and political issues. According to the Council on Economic Priorities, that is a 66 percent increase over the number of shareholder petitions filed in 1986. Among the new resolutions is one from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, which, taking its cue from Sweden's recent regulation of "factory farming," is asking the McDonald's Corporation to investigate current husbandry methods and report back on how the company might encourage development of more humane ways to raise animals. For example, at one point in their lifelong journey to the slaughterhouse, factory cattle are castrated without anesthesia. As for our feathered friends, some church groups are asking Church's Fried Chicken to stop buying meat that comes from birds that are fed broad-spectrum antibiotics as growth promoters. The human ingestion of flesh contaminated with antibiotic residue results in strains of antibiotic-resistant



A Santeria altar in Chicago.

Bedeveled in Matamoros

The drug dealers involved in the ritual murders and mutilations of, at last count, 15 people on the Texas-Mexico border have been accused in the press of practicing *Santeria*, a religion that claims as adherents close to 70 percent of Cubans, as well as followers throughout the U.S.

But the evidence released so far suggests a different religious connection. The reported rituals and items found last month at the death house near Matamoros, Mexico, point to a religious tradition known as *Palo Mayombe*. Like *Santeria*, *Palo Mayombe* has its roots in Cuba. But it has a far smaller following and—unlike *Santeria*—is viewed by most Cubans and other knowledgeable Latinos as a form of witchcraft.

Santeria, literally "saint worship,"

is the name given by Cubans to an animistic religion introduced by slaves into the island during the 18th century. Since their religion was forbidden by the Spanish colonial authorities and by the Roman Catholic Church, *Santeria* practitioners cloaked their African deities in the guise of Spanish Catholic folk saints.

The Cuban revolution forced many *Santeria* believers into exile. Under the veneer of Catholicism, *Santeria* established itself in Miami and gradually spread to Latino communities across the U.S., as can be seen by the establishment of *botanicas*, herb stores, in urban centers throughout the U.S.

Santeria ritual involves animal sacrifices—a fact that has stirred heated objections from animal rights activists. But while *Santeria* is based on animal sacrifice and magic, most Latinos draw a distinction between its rituals, which they view as benign,

Some reporters have conflicts, others have interests

WASHINGTON, D.C.—There seems to be a conflict of interest among Washington's media giants—and it's over the issue of conflict of interest.

Washington Post editors Ben Brad-

lee and Len Downie recently brought up conflict of interest when they chastised *Post* writers who had been on hand for the huge April 9 pro-choice march. Bradlee and Downie, citing *Washington Post* policy against activity "that could compromise or seem to compromise our ability to report or edit fairly," banned those reporters who had been at the march from "any further participation in coverage of the abor-

and those of malevolent and fear-based witchcraft known as *brujeria*. It is *brujeria* that forms the key component of *Palo Mayombe*.

Santeria was brought to Cuba by Yoruba-speaking Africans from what is now Nigeria; *Palo Mayombe* was introduced by Bantu speakers from the Congo. Its key symbol is the *palo*, or stick, which personifies the spirit of the dead.

A key ritual of *Palo Mayombe* is known in Cuba as "dance with the dead," which refers not to human sacrifice but to a kind of Congolese wake. When someone dies, the family then calls a *Mayombe* priest, who performs a dance for more than 24 hours with family members that includes cradling the dead body. The ritual is also used to initiate new members into the religion and to sanctify priests, known as *Mayomberos*.

Along with the mutilated corpses unearthed at the abandoned border ranch 20 miles from Matamoros, police report finding ceramic pots and iron cauldrons filled with animal bones, goat heads and sticks. It is the sticks that most strongly indicate a *Mayombe* connection to the grisly murders. Practitioners of *Mayombe* are called *paleros*, and their ritual cauldrons are usually filled with dirt, water, sticks, stones and the blood of animals.

Neither *Santeria* nor *Mayombe* has ever involved human sacrifice. But both seek protection from deities through animal offerings. But unlike *Santeria*, *Mayombe* has no well-articulated theology. Rather, its practitioners see the world as a demonic place where believers protect themselves not through prayer but by conjuring up the power of the underworld. By killing animals, *Mayombe* followers also believe they acquire the spirit of the victims, which in turn enhances their power, making them indestructible.

If the alleged godfather of the border cult, Adolfo de Jesus Constanzo, is indeed a *Mayombero*, it is likely that he has dedicated himself to the god known as Ogun Arere, who is identified with the spirit of the dead. *Mayombe* practitioners believe Ogun can be manipulated to do harm or obtain power. Ogun is known as a solitary god who shuns cities and in times of trouble retreats to mountains, where he is believed to have his greatest power. In *Mayombe* mythology, Ogun raped his mother, thereby putting a curse on himself and bringing tragedy to the world.

—Nelson Valdes

tion issue."

It all sounds very principled. But you have to wonder whether the *Post* front office was so concerned about being "compromised" in 1980, when columnist George Will covertly coached candidate Ronald Reagan for a debate, then, without mentioning his participation, continued to cover the campaign—for the Washington Post Writers Group. Will, needless to say, was not banned

from writing about "the Reagan issue."

And you have to wonder what the brass at CBS News thinks about conflict of interest these days. Not much, apparently. *In These Times* has learned that the network's chief correspondent for the Oliver North trial is married to a lawyer at the law firm representing North. Reporter Rita Braver's husband is Robert Barnett, a senior partner at the prestigious Washington, D.C. law firm Williams & Connolly, where North's lawyer, Brendan Sullivan, is also employed.

The unusual relationship was first pointed out by the New York City-based media watchdog group, Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting (FAIR). FAIR founder Jeff Cohen is quick to point out that Braver's reporting on the trial does not seem to have been affected by her link to Sullivan—in fact, Braver has been "more complete and fair than other TV correspondents." But Cohen maintains that CBS created a conflict of interest when it assigned a reporter to cover a trial who was married to someone with a direct interest in the case.

Braver denies that there is a conflict. "I think the problem you have with conflict of interest is when people have hidden agendas," she says, noting that her marriage to Barnett has been mentioned by TV

Guide. "We have both pursued our own careers. Williams & Connolly has a lot of high-profile clients. For me not to be able to cover cases they're involved with would be ridiculous."

Tom Goodman, a spokesman for CBS News, also denies that Braver's marriage has presented any problems. But when questioned by *In These Times*, Goodman appeared to be defensive about the relationship, first telling the paper that Braver did not cover the North trial, then calling back to say that Braver and another correspondent "share" the coverage. In fact, Braver has been CBS' reporter for the trial on all but a handful of stories.

Still, FAIR maintains that Braver's coverage can be compared favorably to that of journalists with no apparent conflict of interest. Stephen Engelberg of the *New York Times*, for example, used a sentence representing the views of some of the Republicans on the Iran-contra committee to imply that the committee as a whole had cleared George Bush (see "In Short," April 19). And both Engelberg and the *Washington Post's* Joe Pichirallo managed to write lengthy articles about a 42-page document exhibit in the North trial without mentioning that it describes a 1986 visit by Bush to Honduran President Jose Azcona to "encourage

continued Honduran support for the resistance" in exchange for "clear economic and social benefits." Such "encouragement" was illegal at the time.

But perhaps it's just good luck that Braver and CBS are interested in the North trial at all. The Virginia-based Conference on Issues and Media, which monitors coverage of public issues, has found a disturbing trend in network coverage of the Iran-contra scandal during Bush's presidential campaign. In the first three months of 1988, the three major networks had 74 minutes of campaign coverage related to the scandal. From April to August 1988, after Bush had become assured of winning the Republican primary, there were 5.2 minutes of such coverage. And in the last two months of the campaign, as it was becoming apparent that Bush would be the next president, there was no coverage at all.

Steve Randall, the FAIR staffer who first raised the question of a conflict of interest for Braver, puts the whole issue in perspective. He concedes that the Braver situation is not unusual in the closely knit worlds of Washington politics and journalism: "There's so much of that stuff that goes on that they're just inured to it."

Inured, that is, unless the "stuff that goes on" is a pro-choice march.

—Jim Naureckas and Miles Harvey

Hitler birthday, left debacle

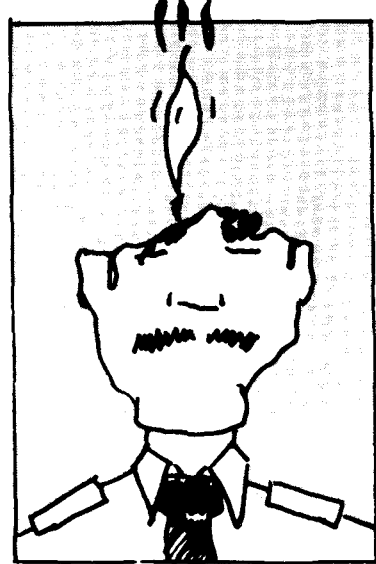
BERLIN—Rumors had been circulating for weeks. On April 20, the 100th birthday of Adolf Hitler, neo-Nazis were planning to meet in Berlin to celebrate their hero's centennial with a series of spectacular—and presumably violent—actions. Nazi literature had been spotted in Berlin's schools, and skinhead violence was on the increase. Citizens' groups warned foreigners to stay at home. Police were dispatched to guard hostels housing political refugees.

But representatives of Berlin's radical left were not satisfied with traditional measures. They didn't trust the police, who, they correctly felt, sympathized with the right, especially West Germany's far-right Republican Party. It was time, they thought, for the people to take matters into their own hands—vigilante justice in affluent, orderly West Germany.

Anti-fascist groups—*antifas*, as they are known in Germany—hastily organized information offices and hotlines to report any neo-Nazi activity. A "mobile security squad" patrolled possible meeting points of the right like the Reichstag, the Nazi parliament. Unlike previous anti-fascist initiatives, the newly formed alliance took on a disturbing, aggressive tone. Ads in the left-wing *Taz* newspaper called on people to participate in "self-defense" measures: "Don't give an inch to fascists, racists and sexists." At *antifa* offices, questions about tactics and goals were met with suspicious silence. On leaving

one such office, this reporter was called back by a woman who urged understanding. "We can't talk about our plans. That would give away the element of surprise." Surprise tactics as part of a defensive strategy?

On the morning of April 20, Berlin prepared for the worst. The previous evening neo-Nazis had broken into a Turkish cemetery and destroyed 38 graves. Yet despite this action, the feared right-wing activity did not materialize. Two neo-Nazis were taken into custody for painting swastikas on shop windows, and a fire was set at a school. But on the left, more than 80 members of "anti-fascist security forces" were arrested. Ten men were held for carrying baseball bats, bicycle chains and gas pistols. According to police, the men said they were "out looking for fascists and Nazis." In the radical and heavily foreign district of Kreuzberg, about 500 young Turks and members of the radical underground scene marched through the streets



chanting, "Nazis out, foreigners stay!" Bombarded by epithets and occasional bottles, the demonstrators responded by smashing shop windows and turning over a trailer at a construction site.

At a press conference the next day, *antifa* organizers declared April 20 a "complete success." They denied accusations that aggressive security groups had fostered hysteria. Self-defense is sometimes necessary, they argued, saying, "You can't talk with skinheads." The previous evening one skinhead was badly beaten by 10 men. Questioned about the Kreuzberg demonstration, one *antifa* representative remarked, "When people are really angry such things can happen"—an argument befitting the right-wing Republicans.

The aggressive strategy of Berlin's *antifa* groups could prove to be a political mistake. Whether the mobile security units did prevent right-wing activity cannot be proved, but the excesses of the militant left stand documented across the pages of the German press, and public fears are confirmed that all you can expect from the left is "chaos." Instead of taking the opportunity to assert their moral superiority over the extreme right, the *antifas* descended to their level. Rather than discussing the meaning of the Fuhrer's birthday for today's Germans, Berlin's radical left only satisfied a personal urge to act.

One can hope that the *antifas* will emerge with a new tactic when the next conflict with the right arises. And that won't be long: September marks the 50th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II.

—Gordon Lewis

bacteria, thereby creating a potential public health risk. Then there are the big turkeys—like Citicorp, General Electric, General Motors, Unisys and Mobil—that attempt to influence elected representatives via donations to Political Action Committees (PACs). Common Cause, the Washington, D.C.-based citizens' lobby group, has organized its members to file resolutions that ask these companies, among others, to report contributions to congressional candidates from any PAC "whose expenses the corporation helps to defray." Common Cause wants such a report to list each PAC's political gifts to congressional candidates (or other PACs) in the years 1983 to 1988, including names of recipients, dates and amounts contributed.

Toxic talk

The Citizen's Clearinghouse for Hazardous Waste, Inc., of Arlington, Va., has developed a lexicon of "the latest terms and acronyms being used by government, industry and their consultants" when discussing hazardous waste. Among some of their definitions are the following:

Cost-benefit analysis: a mathematical process arranged to make people bear maximum cost while providing corporations with maximum benefits;

NIMBY (Not in My Backyard): industry's word for democracy;

GUMBY (Gotta Use Many Backyards): an industry strategy to divide and conquer communities that exercise their democratic right to have a say in what kind of facilities are sited in their communities;

No statistical significance: opponents are not impressed with the amount of death, illness and suffering in your community;

State-of-the-art: industry's latest experiment; and

There's no evidence of a problem: nobody has looked for any problems.



Quaylespeak

Rep. Pat Schroeder, (D-CO) sent her colleagues an April 18 missive titled "Roe vs. Wade vs. Quayle." In her letter Schroeder reproduced an October 25, 1988, Associated Press report on a conversation between then-candidate Dan Quayle and a persistent 11-year-old reporter for the children's news program *Children's Express*. As they were rolling across Illinois in a bus, the girl asked Quayle if he would rather she had a baby than abort the fetus if she became pregnant through her father.

Quayle responded: "That's a difficult question and one that does not have an easy answer, but my answer would be yes."

The 11-year-old girl retorted: "But don't you think it would ruin my whole life? It's not even my fault, and my whole life would be ruined."

Quayle: "Well, I don't think that would be the case at all. I think that if somebody had an unfortunate experience like that, it would be something that you would remember the rest of your life. The idea of a father abusing a daughter is a horrendous situation, one you wish that would never occur, but unfortunately it does occur. It's a tragic situation."

Eleven-year-old girl: "So you would want me to have the baby even though my whole life would be ruined and I could be mentally affected?"

Quayle: "I would hope that the baby would live."

The following week Quayle answered abortion questions again in his plane to Tampa, Fla. According to AP, Quayle "was asked about a comment the previous day in which he said that if his wife were raped and became pregnant, he hoped she would elect to have the baby and not have the abortion." Quayle was then asked if that wasn't a pro-choice stance. He replied: "It's her choice. I told her what I would like, but it's her choice. I can't tell my wife what to do in that situation. She would have that choice [under the law as it is now written]."

By David Moberg

AFTER MORE THAN A DECADE OF BATTLES IN courtrooms, government bureaucracies and state legislatures, most U.S. workers have finally won the right to know what poisons threaten them at work. Now unions and occupational health advocates want workers to have the power to act on that knowledge.

The unions and advocates hope to reduce the estimated 60,000 deaths caused each year by work-related accidents and illnesses.

WORK

Those deaths were commemorated last week on the first labor-sponsored Workers Memorial Day (see "In Short," April 26). After dozens of states and communities passed laws requiring that workers know the hazards of chemicals in their workplaces, the federal government finally announced its own standards in 1985.

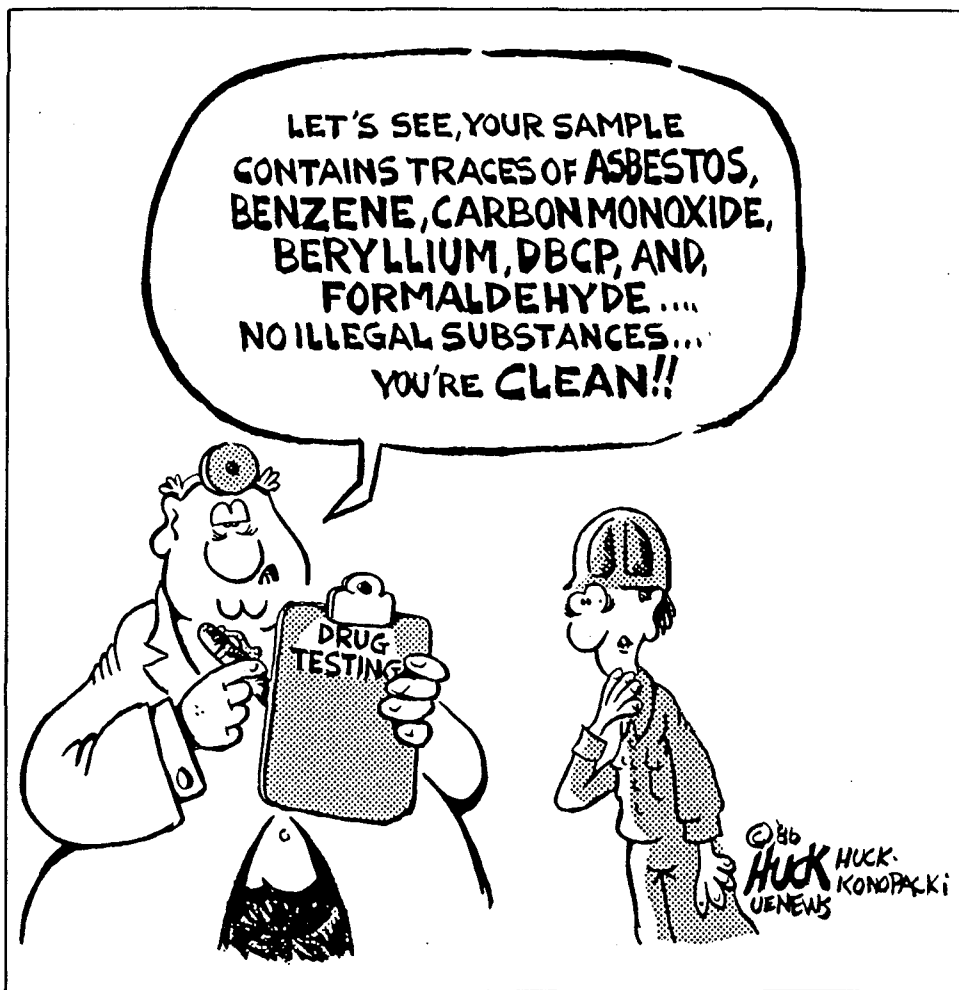
It was a major achievement at a time when the Reagan administration was busy undermining the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). But the push to establish the "power to act" not only promises to revive the nation's faltering progress toward a safer workplace but also could precipitate widespread changes in power relations at work.

Planning accidents: Just before Ronald Reagan took office, the foot-dragging Carter administration finally responded to pressure and proposed a requirement that employers tell workers more fully about on-the-job hazards. But Reagan quickly killed the requirement as part of an OSHA policy that included budget cutbacks, fewer inspectors and less-rigorous inspection procedures.

In the early '80s there was some progress on reducing deaths and injuries on the job, much of it attributable to increased automation. But workplace injuries and illnesses have been rising again from a 1983 low point. The National Safe Workplace Institute, an independent advocacy and research group, estimates that from 1981 to 1987 job accidents killed 9,115 workers who would not have died if early safety trends had continued through the '80s. Although labor during the '80s eventually forced a very reluctant, stonewalling OSHA to issue new standards on dangers of asbestos, benzene, formaldehyde and ethylene oxide, each year about 2,000 new chemicals are introduced into workplaces, most of them untested for effects on workers.

The Reagan administration's laissez-faire approach to worker safety has prompted labor to assume a greater role. "Everyone who works on this issue has come to the conclusion that there is no way workers can depend on government alone to make the workplace safe," argues Steelworkers Health and Safety Director Mike Wright. "To some extent those of us on union staffs discovered what workers on health and safety committees knew all along: it's the power of workers on the job that makes workplaces safer."

Worker advocates had wanted health and safety committees for all workplaces to be mandated in the original 1970 OSHA legislation, but that demand had been bargained away. Unlike most European and Canadian workplace health and safety legislation, where the emphasis is on worker and union rights, U.S. law defines workplace health and



Knowing is not enough; labor wants power to act

safety as a matter to be settled between government regulators and companies, with very little worker participation, Wright said. For example, in parts of Canada, workers or their union can veto company doctors, safety training plans or protective equipment. In Sweden, workers are deeply involved in the design of workplaces to prevent health and safety problems.

In the U.S., many union contracts, especially for large industrial unions like the United Auto Workers, Mineworkers, Steelworkers or Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers (OCAW), provide for joint labor-management safety committees with varying powers. But the vast majority of workplaces are not unionized, and even the union committees need support in law to be most effective.

Pressuring Reagan: To circumvent the Reagan administration, safe-workplace advocates mounted a drive for local and state laws mandating workers' right to know the poisons on their job. The growing movement of local Committees on Occupational Safety and Health (COSH) groups, which started in Chicago in 1972 and now number 25 around the country, made "right to know" its main demand. Philadelphia passed the first ordinance in 1980, and now 30 states and 80 communities have right-to-know legislation.

In response to both grass-roots pressure and corporate desire for uniform regulations, OSHA finally issued its own right-to-know standard in 1985. It requires labeling hazardous chemicals, giving workers access to safety data sheets, training workers for their special risks and providing worker access to the company's hazard communication program. But there have been ongoing battles over what industries are covered, and construction workers were finally included only

last month. Also, according to a study by Philaposh, the Philadelphia COSH group, OSHA has made few inspections to enforce the new standard and has fined violators a hardly intimidating average of \$26 per violation.

"If workers don't enforce the law at the worksite with the threat of OSHA action, then there's no real enforcement," argues pioneer right-to-know-and-act proponent Rick Engler of the New Jersey Industrial Union Council. "We have right to know on paper, but even if OSHA tripled the number of inspectors [now fewer than 1,000 nationally], which would be good, there's a limit to what they can do."

Safety by committee: New Jersey right-to-act advocates plan to introduce state legislation requiring all private or public employers of 20 or more workers to establish an "on-site hazard prevention committee" composed equally of labor and management

Unions and health advocates want workers to be able to take quick action against on-the-job safety threats.

representatives. At least once a month the committee would inspect the workplace. It would also investigate accidents, accompany outside inspectors, review medical hygiene and testing plans and screen all company health or safety professionals before hiring.

The committee, which would receive substantial training, would have the power to stop hazardous work if the employer refused

to correct problems. Community groups could also inspect workplaces, a reflection of the close alliance of environmentalists and workplace health advocates in New Jersey, Engler said.

Later this year the AFL-CIO plans to introduce federal legislation to reform OSHA. Its centerpiece will be mandatory labor-management safety committees with extensive training. OCAW Secretary-treasurer Tony Mazzocchi (see story on page 16), whose ideas inspired the right-to-know-and-act movements, argues that each workplace should even have worker safety ombudsmen with guaranteed job security who are deputized as OSHA inspectors. "We're moving from individual rights to mandatory collective worker rights and worker committees," says Eric Frumin, health and safety director for the Clothing and Textile Workers.

But labor also wants to strengthen individual worker rights to refuse unsafe work. OSHA currently refuses to act on more than 90 percent of the cases in which workers complain they have been fired for exercising their rights to a safe workplace. In Ontario, Canada, Wright reports, workers can't be discharged for safety and health actions unless they can be proven by the company to have been acting in bad faith.

Yet even protecting an individual's right isn't enough. "If you're a worker in a small factory with an unguarded drill press that the manager assigns to you and you think it's unsafe and exercise your right to act, it means somebody else will get maimed, probably somebody younger with less experience," argues Joseph Kinney, director of the National Safe Workplace Institute. "To make the right to act real, there has to be collective leverage."

Kinney also insists that there must be more vigorous criminal prosecution of employers. Although the federal government rarely files criminal charges in occupational safety cases, state and local government attorneys in California brought more than 250 criminal cases between 1979 and 1986, resulting in six bosses going to jail and in serious fines for the other executives. That may be one reason why the rate of construction industry deaths in major California cities was less than one-fifth the death rate for construction in New York, Philadelphia or Chicago.

Change of heart: The AFL-CIO's decision to back mandatory safety committees represents a rebuff to the old labor perspective that if workers' rights and representation are guaranteed by law, they won't need unions. But as Philaposh Director Jim Moran argues, "If you want to organize workers, what better thing to have than an organized health and safety committee within that plant. The first thing they'll discover is that this employer who wants to act as benefactor doesn't want to do anything that costs him something."

With meaningful legal powers and a strong, organized rapport with workers, the safety committees could reshape American workplaces. Yet even in Sweden, where the labor movement and laws are strong, safety committees do not arbitrarily shut down production. "It's a power issue and a workplace democracy issue," Moran argues. "The rights of those committees are crucial, including the right to stop unsafe jobs. That's the cutting edge, prevention. Information is good, but we can't just keep counting bodies." □

By Salim Muwakkil

NEW ORLEANS

WHEN BLACK LEADERS AND ACTIVISTS convened the first Black Political Convention in Gary, Ind., in 1972, there were about 1,000 African-American elected officials in the U.S.; today there are nearly 7,000. Richard Hatcher, who was then Gary's mayor, now characterizes those increases as an "electoral revolution," and he traces them directly to the '72 convention.

Despite that revolution, the African-American community has fallen deeper into poverty and now suffers from a wide range of social problems that some experts say endanger its very existence. This sense of crisis provoked Hatcher, Rev. Jesse Jackson and several others to convene a gathering with the Gary convention's grand scope. It's time, they agreed, to devise more effective strategies.

The result was the "African-American Summit" that recently concluded a three-day conference at the convention center here. Although the April 21-23 gathering attracted fewer than half the 5,000 people who attended the '72 confab, organizers insist it marked a new phase of the black movement.

"One major conference theme is that we realize that what we've been doing is not enough. We needed an African-American agenda for the year 2000," Hatcher said. "New conditions require us to undertake new initiatives, new ideas, new programs."

However, few new ideas can be found in the seven-page working document that surveys the most plausible proposals flushed out during the summit. Instead, the document frames old ideas—like reparations for slavery, black economic solidarity and unity without uniformity—in new, more urgent contexts.

Pensions for development: Jackson, who spoke on the summit's second day, focused on an economic strategy that potentially could redirect resources into the African-American community. He called for the development of an "American investment bank," financed by workers' pension funds, to begin investing money into human capital.

"We can take just 10 percent of the \$80 billion in public pension funds and use the money to lift the boats stuck on the bottom of the American economy," Jackson proposed. "The movement's next phase is to open the doors of capital." This idea initially was floated during Jackson's '88 presidential campaign but attracted little attention at the time.

During his campaign Jackson pushed the public investment bank idea as a populist proposal whose time has come. In his summit speech he used the argument of racial reparations as an additional justification. If it was proper to pay reparations to the Japanese-Americans who were illegally removed from their land and incarcerated, if it was proper to award Jewish people reparations in the form of Israel after the Holocaust, then it is proper to pay reparations to African-Americans for 350 years of free labor and 150 years of legal apartheid, he said.

Farrakhan or can't? In addition to policy matters, many summit delegates became preoccupied with the more peripheral issues of attendance. Conferees first wondered how many black leaders would show up. They next wondered about the Nation of Islam's Louis Farrakhan: would he be allowed to address the throng? Should he?

Weeks before the summit press reports



Applauding unity are (left to right): Ramona Edelin, David Richardson, Richard Hatcher, Louis Farrakhan and C. Delores Tucker.

The black summit tackles some of the big uneasies

revealed that some black leaders balked at sharing a dais with Farrakhan. According to Pennsylvania state Rep. David Richardson, a summit organizer, "There were some minor Republican officials who refused to come because of Minister Farrakhan's appearance." But, Richardson added, "he was invited from the very beginning, and we had no intention of withdrawing our invitation." What's more, "the delegates were insistent that Farrakhan have an opportunity to speak."

One fascinating aspect of the three-day affair was the crowd's reaction to the Farrakhan issue. Because of the overwhelmingly negative media coverage he has received, it seemed safe to assume Farrakhan was not very popular among the middle-class activists who made up the bulk of the delegates.

That assumption proved incorrect. Despite the fact that his appearance wasn't announced until Saturday night—and he wasn't listed in the program schedule—his Sunday morning address drew the summit's largest audience.

Utilizing well-practiced rhetorical flourishes, Farrakhan's speech excited the crowd and provoked several standing ovations, but it included few usable ideas. His wide popularity with summit delegates derives in part from a realization that much of their new focus sounds much like his longtime appeals for racial unity and stricter moral values.

"We are now beginning to understand some of the things Minister Farrakhan was saying were important all along," said Joyce James, a delegate from Philadelphia. "The fact that we now call ourselves African-American is an example of the Muslim doctrine to proudly proclaim our true identity and tirelessly seek self-knowledge."

"The fact that we now focus our concern on the condition of the black family and other moral issues is something that Farrakhan's followers have been advocating for a long time."

Ironically, Farrakhan is not fond of the term "African-American." He contends that "black" is a more accurate nomenclature. "Both Africa and America are European words," Farrakhan said.

It is ironic that some black Republicans should object to Farrakhan's appearance, because his philosophy is more akin to the

BLACK AMERICA

Republican platform than it is to the ideology of the Democratic Party's Jackson faction. Farrakhan's presence didn't keep the Communist Party's Angela Davis from attending the summit.

New discussions: Recent calls for a vigorous entrepreneurial spirit among African-Americans are coming from those who used to denounce free enterprise as a euphemism for exploitation. The continuing crisis in the black community has opened new areas of discussion among African-American leaders and prompted the lowering of ideological barriers. It is this willingness to discuss once-forbidden ideas that attracted black conservative Robert Woodson to the summit.

Woodson, president of the Washington, D.C.-based National Center for Neighborhood Enterprises, said he came to New Orleans because he sensed that he and many of his former rivals now "are on the same rhetorical playing field." Woodson, who strongly advocates tenant ownership of public housing, enterprise zones and other conservative nostrums, is a dedicated foe of the "civil rights orthodoxy."

African-American activists are no longer reluctant to discuss issues of crime and drugs and other social pathologies. These matters previously were dismissed simply as byproducts of white oppression that would vanish once black people were sufficiently empowered. But the destructive

powers of these debilitating pathologies were vastly underestimated, and black leadership is beginning to realize the importance of a cultural component to help reduce African-Americans' special vulnerability to those afflictions.

"The better people feel about who they are, the less susceptible they are to the lure of drugs and crime," said Ramona Edelin, president of the National Urban Coalition, a summit organizer and prime mover behind the nomenclature change from "black" to "African-American." "When we look at it now it seems so obvious that since we are reared in a society that has enshrined the concept of white supremacy, or at least Eurocentrism, African-Americans are socialized to feel inferior."

Crisis of ambiguity: Ronald Walters, the Howard University professor of political science who authored most of the summit's documents, said the crisis in the black community is as much internal as external. "Perhaps it is even more internal, since we have always believed that internal unity could provide the strength and determination to overcome most external problems."

Walters said part of the problem is the "crisis of ambiguity brought on by both progress and deterioration in our community." He cited the growth of the black middle class and the tremendous gains made by African-Americans in many professions as examples of the progress.

But, he noted, the living standards of average African-Americans continue to fall. "Our average family income is only 56 percent that of whites; half of our children and more than one-third of our entire community are officially considered poor."

The summit document lists several areas of concern the delegates planned to take back to their home regions for consideration. Among those issues are the following:

- Strengthening the African-American family.

- Housing. Calls for a vastly increased level of federal assistance dominate this category. Residential management and ownership is boosted.

- Education. The focus here is on increased federal assistance for education. Standardized testing is assailed, and larger

Continued on page 10

IN THESE TIMES MAY 3-9, 1989 7

By James Evans & Jack Epstein

PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH'S MUCH-TOUTED war on drugs may get a rude reception in Bolivia on May 7 when that nation's 2.8 million voters select their next president.

The front runner is retired Gen. Hugo Banzer Suarez, a former dictator who seized power in a 1971 military coup financed by drug lords. Before he was in turn ousted by fellow officers in 1978, Banzer had transformed the military's participation in cocaine from isolated bribes to multimillion-dollar profits.

In 1983 the 63-year-old general participated in a coup attempt with known military drug traffickers. The coup failed, and since then Banzer has kept a low drug-trafficking profile as he concentrates on politics, according to one U.S. official.

But a Banzer victory could signal the demise of the troubled U.S. anti-drug campaign being waged in cooperation with outgoing President Victor Paz Estenssoro. Bolivia currently receives \$59.3 million in U.S. economic support and drug-eradication program financing, the most given to any South American nation.

Yet that aid could prove fruitless if Banzer's anti-drug cooperation turns out to be the same as offered by Panamanian strongman Gen. Manuel Noriega, who is indicted on drug trafficking charges in the U.S. and who Washington has been trying to dislodge for nearly two years. The State Department concedes that it is indeed worried about Banzer's drug past. "There is that concern," says Cresencio Arcos, the deputy assistant secretary for inter-American affairs.

Though Banzer publicly opposes the drug trade and supports a gradual transition to legal cash crops with U.S., European and Japanese aid, he is critical of U.S. meddling in Bolivian affairs, like most of the other nine presidential candidates. The U.S. has no business sending troops to raid jungle cocaine laboratories, as it did in 1986, or forcing a ban on all coca leaf production, as it did last year, according to Banzer. Yet this public posturing may be only a smoke screen for his real concerns.

Drug-dependent: Bolivia, with 6.8 million people, is the region's poorest nation. Annual per capita income is \$610, life expectancy is 52 years, infant mortality is 117 per 1000, literacy is 63 percent, and less than 1,000 miles of road are paved on a land surface the size of Texas and California combined. Moreover, world prices for its leading official export—tin—collapsed in 1985, leaving 30,000 miners without jobs.

As a result, Bolivia is heavily dependent on foreign aid and the cocaine trade. It is the second-largest grower of coca leaf after Peru and provides more than half the cocaine entering the U.S. An estimated 100,000 coca farmers produce 170,000 tons of leaf a year, which is crushed into coca paste and then processed into pure cocaine.

Bolivian coca acreage increased by 20 percent last year, while Bolivian traffickers have been bypassing Colombian processors and setting up their own refining and transportation networks, according to U.S. assessments. The cocaine trade annually earns more than all other Bolivian exports combined—a fact that Banzer is intimately aware of.

However, the general's past business ac-

It's heads up in Bolivia for politics of cocaine

tivities seem to be a forgotten topic during the campaign. It has been overwhelmed by the need to resuscitate the country's comatose economy. "Memories are short in Bolivia," explained a U.S. missionary who has lived there for the past 10 years. "They re-

LATIN AMERICA

member a semblance of stability [under Banzer], and there's lots of money behind him. Plus nobody bats an eye at drug activity. It's almost a non-issue. It'll be business as usual if Banzer wins."

Changing the equation: On the surface Banzer's takeover in 1971 merely carried on a long military tradition in the landlocked country. Bolivia has been South America's most unstable nation, with 189 coups, countercoups and other changes of government in 164 years of independence. The general's 1971-78 presidency is the nation's second longest reign of power.

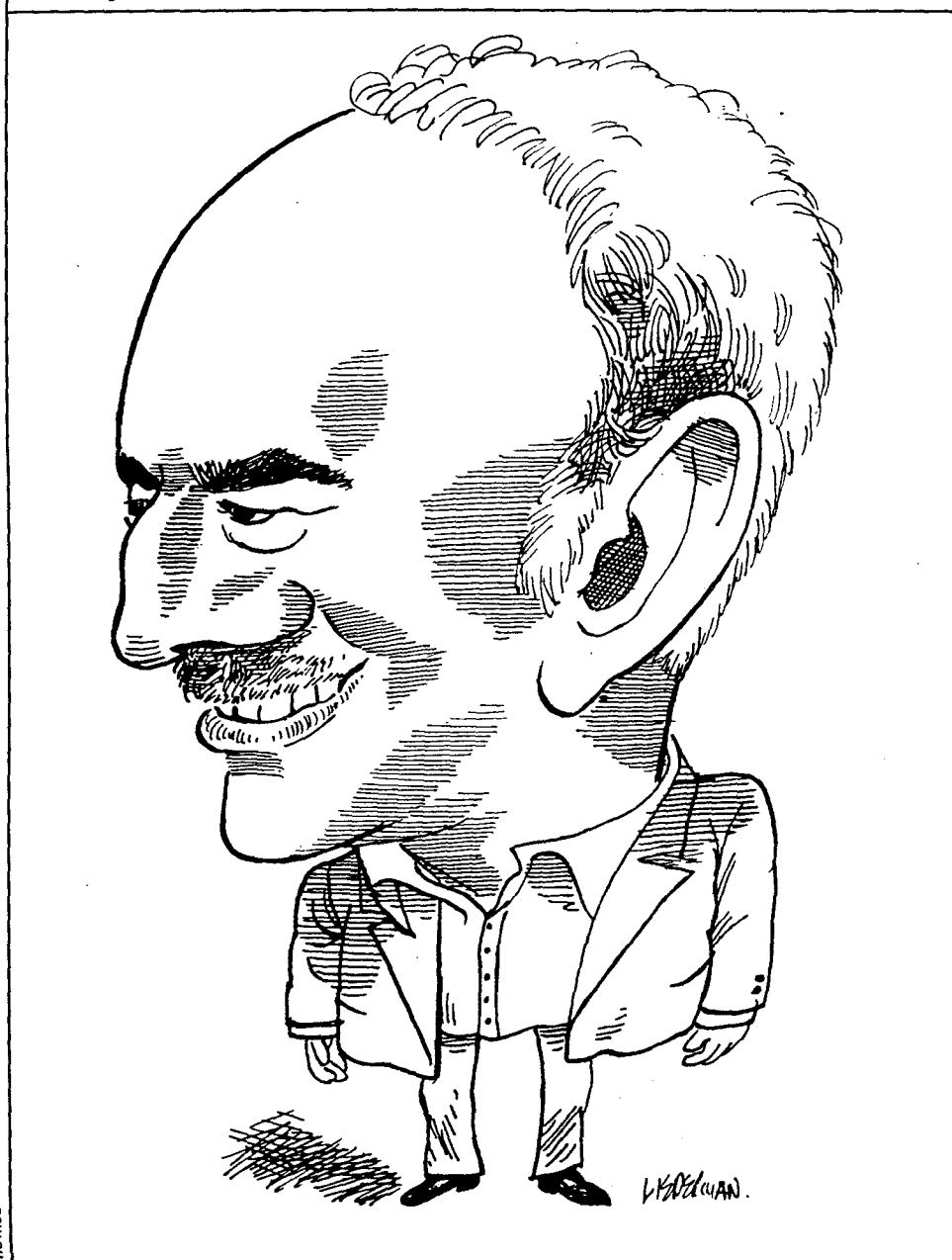
But Banzer's seizure added a new element to the power game—cocaine. He overthrew leftist army Gen. Juan Jose Torres, a reformist strongman who refused to grant government protection to the coca kingpins. They responded by offering Banzer, who was in exile in neighboring Paraguay, financing for

his eventual takeover. One of the coup's financiers, Edwin Gasser, a Bolivian citizen of Swiss descent, later boasted on German television that German-Bolivians had created the Banzer government and that the "military came cheap."

Banzer's family also has been involved in drug peddling. According to a teacher at the American Cooperative School in La Paz, where resident U.S. diplomats and others sent their children, Banzer's daughter openly sold cocaine on campus during her father's regime. Nephew Willie Banzer was implicated as the Houston connection in dealings with an American citizen who died when his light plane slammed into the Bolivian jungle laden with cocaine. And a physician son-in-law was

Erstwhile dictator Gen. Hugo Banzer is leading in the presidential race. And that's just fine with the drug cartel, if not with Washington.

Gen. Hugo Banzer: Once a dictator, now a candidate. Will he win by a nose?



arrested in Canada with a suitcase full of cocaine at the end of Banzer's presidency.

During the presidential campaign of 1979, Bolivian drug agents raided a large cattle ranch on the eastern side of the Andes that turned out to be owned by Banzer. While a gun battle was in progress, a high-ranking military officer arrived and ordered the agents to cease and leave the area. The agents ignored him, eventually arresting the men inside and confiscating more than 600 pounds of raw coca paste.

Banzer told reporters that the drug manufacturers "were using my house illegally. I didn't know." The Bolivian electorate apparently didn't believe him or approve. Remembering his seven-year iron-fisted rule, they gave him a scant 12 percent of the vote.

But Banzer's former subordinates didn't like the election results and overthrew the elected interim president. Officers involved in the infamous 1980-81 "cocaine junta" of army Gen. Luis Garcia Meza, whose seizure of power also was partially financed by Gasser, were trained in Banzer's administration. One officer in particular, air force Gen. Waldo Bernal, Banzer's minister of education, became chief of air force operations under Garcia Meza.

Bernal openly used military transports to move tons of coca leaf inside the country and to deliver the paste to foreign processors. In fact, Garcia Meza and his ministers were so blatant in their cocaine activities that an angry U.S. responded by cutting aid, closing its Drug Enforcement Agency office and recalling the ambassador.

Banzer also was a principal in an unsuccessful coup attempt in 1983 with another of Garcia Meza's cocaine cronies, army Col. Faustino Rico Toro. Rico Toro, chief of military intelligence under Garcia Meza and long known to be a high-level figure in the drug trade, had been relieved of his duties by then-President Hernan Siles Suazo.

The new Banzer: However, in the last 10 years the resilient Banzer has resurrected himself, convincing Bolivians that he is a different man from the one who outlawed strikes and jailed, tortured or exiled his critics in the '70s. He has carefully built his rightist National Democratic Action party into a formidable political machine. He actually won the presidential popular vote in 1985, only to lose to Paz Estenssoro in Congress. (A candidate needs at least 50 percent of the vote to secure the office outright.)

During the congressional debate that selected Paz Estenssoro, one senator passionately asked his colleagues not to vote for Banzer after describing his own imprisonment and torture during the general's reign. With 10 candidates in the May 7 election, Congress is expected to choose the next president for the third consecutive time. But this time such ardent pleas may land on deaf ears, as Banzer is said already to have enough support to capture the office.

For the U.S., a Banzer presidency might signal an increase in exactly what the Bush administration has promised to eliminate. Judging by Banzer's track record, to expect him to crack down on the cocaine trade is wishful thinking. Instead, the cocaine czars can expect to expand production, most of which will probably end up on the streets of America. □

James Evans and Jack Epstein are San Francisco-based journalists who specialize in Latin American affairs.

By Diana Johnstone

ON A FINE SPRING DAY IN BUDAPEST, WHILE vacationers sunbathed or took a dip in the Gellert Hotel's ornate outdoor pool amid the well-kept remains of Austro-Hungarian imperial luxury, a small group of students held a press conference at the Technical University a few blocks away. They were announcing a demonstration against urban air pollution caused by automobile exhaust that they expected would draw as many as 350 people.

At first glance, the scene might have taken

HUNGARY

place in any prosperous Western country. The students inside, and the traffic outside, looked much the same as in Milan or Copenhagen.

But it is hardly likely that in the West such a tenuous sprout of a mass movement would have actually drawn reporters from leading newspapers to cover its press conference, as this one did. Even more exotic was the presence of a casually dressed, earnest representative of the Ministry of Environment, scarcely older than the student protesters themselves, who listened attentively to the complaints, agreed with most of them, tried to explain government policy and humbly submitted to the blame heaped on the system.

One of the students was unhappy because the media ignored their protests. A reporter replied that the press is friendly and can write much more than it could only six months ago. "The problem now is that we can write what we want, but nothing happens."

In Budapest today, one is bound to wonder: is Hungary already part of the West, or still part of the East? And what exactly are East and West? Where do the essential differences between them lie? Can they mix and merge, or is there some hidden chasm that will appear clearly only when the reformers, advancing confidently toward the West, fall into it?

To tourists, Budapest looks prosperous and elegant, although the economy is in the midst of a precipitous decline. There is no sign of the underdevelopment of Portugal or the postindustrial squalor of Britain. Cars jam the streets and stores are well stocked. The only places customers have to stand in line are in front of the stylish Adidas shop or at Szindbad, the leading gourmet restaurant. Intellectuals seem more at ease with personal computers here than in France, and facilities for visiting foreign journalists are world-class. Everyone who knows anything seems to be available to talk about it with clarity and good sense. They have differing points of view, but all agree on one thing: Hungary is in the throes of a grave crisis.

This invisible crisis underlies the current extraordinary solicitude displayed by the media and even the government for such a fledgling "social movement" as the students' committee against urban air pollution. After years of monopolizing political life, the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (HSWP) is trying to nurture the development of a pluralistic "civil society."

This is partly to impress potential Western investors, but, more profoundly, because the party does not know how to solve the new problems that are piling up. It needs help, and it needs to spread the blame.

Initially, however, the new movements are not at all disposed to share the blame, but



The Danube River divides environmentalists and technocrats as well as Buda and Pest.

The economic dilemma: brainwork or brawn?

instead quite understandably heap it all onto the single-party government, which finds itself more and more on the defensive.

Boo Danube: Offering support to the student environmentalists at the Technical University press conference were representatives from two of the most important of the new Hungarian social movements, the year-old independent youth organization FIDESZ and the Danube Circle.

When a leader of the Danube Circle offered advice, the students listened respectfully. The Danube Circle is the most seasoned and prestigious of the new movements. For over four years it has been fighting against construction of a dam at Nagymaros, some 20 miles upstream from Budapest, where the river stops being the border between Hungary and Czechoslovakia and bends southward to cross Hungary on its way to Yugoslavia. The project is part of a vast international regional development plan dating back to the '50s, revived in the '80s when Austrian banks provided the financing.

In 1981, science journalist Janos Vargha wrote the first critical report, which was reproduced in the January 1982 *Reader's Digest*. Vargha set out to show that the interest of the hydraulic engineers' lobby in obtaining big contracts distorted water management priorities.

The intellectuals in the Danube Circle point out that everything is wrong with the Nagymaros dam project.

- Economically it makes no sense: the dam will produce too little electricity to justify such a vast hydroelectric project. The water management authority juggled figures with the arbitrariness allowed in command economy planning. Overruns rival those of the Pentagon, with costs more than tripling since 1982.

- Financially it is a scandal: Austrian banks are lending the Hungarian government money to hire an Austrian construction firm

(Donaukraftwerke) to build a dam that will supply electricity to Austria—but debt-burdened Hungary will have to pay back the loan with interest.

- Ecologically it is a disaster: the rich natural water reserves will be perturbed and eventually polluted by the changes in flow and level. "The Danube is a drinking water resource, not an energy resource," says Vargha.

Besides all that, it will aesthetically mar the landscape and change the natural boundary of the country by moving the Danube into Czechoslovakia over a stretch of several miles.

Hungary's questioning young intellectuals face up to the eco/info revolution.

Last September, the Danube Circle organized a demonstration that brought out 35,000 people to protest in front of the parliament. The government answered that it is too late now to break the contract with Czechoslovakia and the Austrians.

All the new independent movements support the Danube Circle. Last October, after the parliament voted overwhelmingly to support the government and continue building the dam, FIDESZ initiated an unheard-of procedure to recall Miklos Vida, the member of parliament presiding over the session, for violating the will of the voters. "After that collapse of elective democracy, we turned to direct democracy," recounts András Szekfü of the Danube Circle. By the end of February, they had collected 124,062 signatures demanding a referendum.

Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth has agreed to ask the parliament to set up a referendum

next June and has promised meanwhile to do nothing "irreversible" at Nagymaros. Some think the government may use the rising costs as a pretext to drop the project.

The battle against the Nagymaros dam has become the symbol of the revolt of the intelligentsia in Hungary. In the dam scandal, the insurgent intellectuals are fighting against most of what they find wrong with the system: blind faith in productivist technology, the power of managerial lobbies, disregard for the environment, opaque decision-making procedures, impenetrable accounting, financial idiocy and the absence of democratic correctives.

The technical arguments on water levels and organic content are hard for a lay person to judge. If Hungary's intelligentsia—not only in the opposition, but to a large extent inside the ruling party as well—accepts the Danube Circle's arguments, it is above all because the spirit of the times has changed. Not so long ago, building dams on rivers was widely regarded as constructive, progressive, even heroic and beautiful. Governments—and not just Communist governments—won popular approval by building dams.

Laughs on Lenin: Today the Danube Circle repeats as an ironic anti-government slogan Lenin's definition of Communism as "workers' councils plus electrification." Industrialization is in disgrace in Hungary. One reason is the worldwide ecological crisis. The other is the decline of heavy industry as the leading source of national wealth and power.

In today's world, wealth is generated by financial transactions. A country that sticks to traditional industry risks falling into the Third World. Hungarians consider—by all evidence, with good reason—that they are an intelligent people, at a cultural level worthy of joining the world of financial manipulation and services.

The new movements springing up in Budapest are all representative of this vision of Hungary's potential future. FIDESZ was founded last year by students from Budapest's elite schools. It has received \$500,000 from the Soros Foundation, founded by Hungarian-born New York finan-

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Summit

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teacher salaries are advocated. The document also calls for a significant increase in the federal commitment to historically black colleges.

- Employment. Again, the focus is on increased governmental commitment.

- Economic empowerment. The document urges support for all African-American economic development projects, including such programs as the Black United Front's "buy black" campaign and the Nation of Islam's "power" program. It calls for the establishment of many African-American joint ventures to maximize capital formation for investment purposes.

- Political empowerment. Not much here, except for a call for African-American elected officials to become more accountable to their constituents.

- Global commitment. The focus here is

on the African-American communities' interest in foreign policy toward Africa. Perhaps the most noteworthy item in this category is the warning that the cooling East-West struggle could be transformed into an East-West alliance that would then pressure Third-World states.

- Drugs and criminal justice. This category employs the most ominous language. African-Americans are "under siege," the document states. "Drugs, drug perpetrators and drug violence are killing African-Americans by the thousands. The nightmare must end."

The document urges the U.S. to attack drug profiteers on the national and international scene, but to be careful in protecting civil rights as it fights the drug war at home. It calls for the establishment of additional drug prevention and treatment programs and "strong individual and community sanctions against participating in the drug trade."

- Legislative agenda. The most noteworthy aspect of this plank is the proposal that a course in racial relations be taught as a mandated subject for students of all races in both secondary and postsecondary education.

"We leave this conference with a new sense of direction and commitment," said Richardson. "We also will be working on some things that may not specifically be on the agenda list." For example, he said, Jackson's '88 election victories in various congressional districts open an opportunity to triple the number of African-Americans in Congress.

Although the summit was the first of its kind in almost two decades, many delegates were veterans of similar conferences and are aware of both the promises and pitfalls of such gatherings. "I didn't expect any miracles," said Lillian Mobeley, from Los Angeles. "But look out, L.A.—I'm bringing a renewed spirit back home with me." □

Hungary

Continued from page 9

cier George Soros, for its independent academy, which holds discussion courses on such provocative subjects as "How to survive the 20th century" and "Why is solidarity out of fashion?"

On May 14, the new Democratic Trade Union of Scientific Workers will celebrate its first anniversary. Hungary's first independent labor organization is a virtual union for the intelligentsia—despite the name, all the "mental work" professions are welcome, including journalists. Its program, adopted last December, demands that "intellectual work win the rank it deserves in modern civilized society" and vows to work out "realistic alternatives" for radically changing the situation of the intelligentsia. This involves the unambiguous rejection of the present structure.

"The strength of our union," says spokesman Tibor Vidos, "is not in its numbers [4,500 members] but its enormous intellectual power." It stands for "those who have an interest in changing society."

The top priority is to fight for greater investment in education and research in order to develop brain power as Hungary's number one resource.

Everyone agrees about what's wrong with the Hungarian economy. It is not that Hungary cannot find a market for its agricultural and manufactured products. It is, as Vidos says, the steady devaluation in the world market of Hungarian products. The prices of Hungary's exports have been going down in relation to Hungary's imports.

Communist leadership after World War II, recalls Vidos, promoted a "simply crazy" development of heavy industry, coal and steel. Vidos says the new union emphasizes that today "we must invest in science and technology or drop into the Third World."

In or out of the party, Hungary's intelligentsia agrees. This fear of the "Third World" of heavy industry and ambition to join the "First World" of the West may be the most powerful motor behind the "silent revolution."

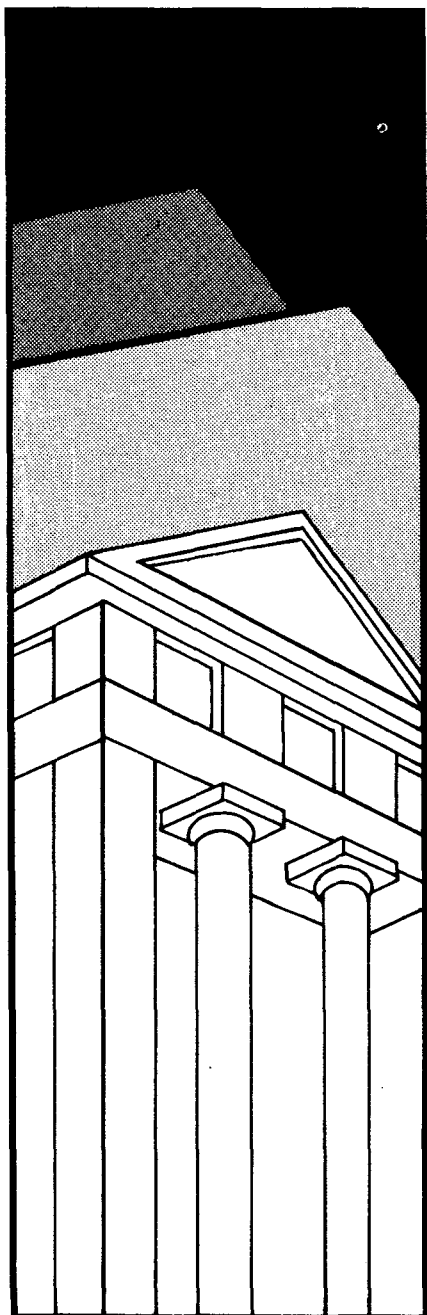
But all the activity of the "new movements" and political groupings involves no more than about 40,000 intellectuals. They all know this and repeat it uneasily. "The biggest problem of the independent movements is that the masses are silent," says Vidos. Hungarian workers are "completely depoliticized" by the higher standard of living the regime has given them. Now the necessary reforms mean shutting down their factories and throwing them out of work. "The real shutdowns have not started yet," says Vidos. "When they do in the industrial regions, there is a real danger of an uncontrolled strike movement."

The official national trade union council, SZOT, shares these fears. Recently, it complained to the government that its support for official austerity policies is running into hostility from the rank and file because the economy is not improving and "all the sacrifices seem senseless to ordinary people."

What Hungarian intellectuals fear is not a repetition of 1956, with the Soviet army intervening to put down their movement, but rather an uncontrolled "explosion" of their own industrial working class, which has been exalted as the vanguard of social progress and is now about to be shoved into the ash can of history. □

Next week: Hungary Part II: Explosion or historic compromise?

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ITT2

By Katie Richards

LONDON

BRITISH PRIME MINISTER MARGARET Thatcher thinks of herself as a leader who has rolled back the frontiers of the state. But too often she has rolled them the wrong way. Free markets have fared well under Thatcherism; civil freedoms have not. On May 4 Thatcher will celebrate a decade in office—a decade that has produced a dramatic erosion of civil liberties in Britain.

"Liberty is ill in Britain," writes Ronald Dworkin, university professor of jurisprudence at Oxford University and professor of law at New York University, in the magazine *Index on Censorship*. In September 1988 the magazine devoted its entire issue to the recent decline of civil liberties in the United Kingdom. And in January the National Council for Civil Liberties (NCCL), a rough equivalent of the American Civil Liberties Union, launched a new drive to meet the challenges. In its February newsletter the NCCL said, "We feel that our work is more vital than ever before in the face of the attacks on civil liberties during the last 10 years, attacks that threaten the health of our democracy."

Uncivil liberties: The long list of assaults on civil liberties in the Thatcher era continues to grow. The following are a few of the many examples:

• **Right to silence:** In October 1988 the secretary of state for Northern Ireland, Tom King, announced that people held by police in Northern Ireland no longer are protected by the right to remain silent. Suspects can still decide not to talk if they wish, but their silence can later be pointed out to jury members, who can then draw their own negative conclusions.

Thus the rug was pulled out from under two basic principles of English law: that one should not be made to incriminate oneself, and that one should be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

• **Prior-restraint media censorship:** The British media has been increasingly subjected to prior restraint by the British courts. The *Spycatcher* case, in which the government delayed for three years the British publication of an intelligence officer's embarrassing memoirs is the most famous example, but there are also the lesser-known cases of censorship in the TV series *Secret Society*, on the Zircon spy satellite, and in a radio series, *My Country Right or Wrong*, on the secret services.

The government's growing use of court injunctions as a tool to halt politically sensitive or embarrassing stories means that the media cannot take these cases before juries, which have historically tended to be sympathetic. And because injunctions can be drawn so vaguely, whole topics of debate can be quashed. During the *Spycatcher* fiasco, for example, the British press was prevented by injunction from even reporting the progress of the legal case against the book in Australia, where it was originally published. And in the *My Country Right or Wrong* case, a vaguely worded injunction prevented the British Broadcasting Corporation from airing any interviews with current or ex-members of the security services or from even identifying them by name.

In October 1988, in the name of anti-terrorism, the government banned broadcast interviews with members or supporters of certain organizations, including the Irish Republican Army, its political wing Sinn Féin and the paramilitary Ulster Defense Association. Even members of Parliament and other



Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher: the invisible hand always steers to the right.

Thatcherism: free markets and a regulated citizenry

public officials belonging to these groups are included in the ban. They cannot speak on the air, even on topics unrelated to the troubles in Northern Ireland.

When the gag order was announced, journalists protested vociferously. Some demanded that their reports from Northern Ireland include South African-style disclaimers to warn that the stories were compiled under media restrictions. But journalists have since found a way to partially circumvent the ban. Broadcast outlets still air interviews with banned officials, but with the sound of the speakers' voices dubbed out and their words dubbed back in by the reporting journalists.

• **Public order:** The Public Order Act of 1986 gives the police greatly increased powers. For the first time, police are given control over stationary, open-air meetings of 20 persons or more. They can now change the venue of protests, and so weaken their impact. They can also invoke restrictions on outdoor public gatherings, such as limits on the number of participants.

The act also introduces vague new offenses such as "threatening behavior." These new catch-all categories make it illegal to speak or act in a way that is insulting, abusive, threatening to someone else, or likely to harass, alarm or distress another person, regardless of whether that person is actually harassed, alarmed, distressed, etc. To make matters worse, the act places the burden of proof on defendants to show that their behavior was not likely to be upsetting.

One application of this law has been to prosecute gay men for kissing in public. And in the infamous "Madame M" case, three persons hanging up a poster portraying Thatcher as a dominatrix, complete with whip and stiletto heels, were arrested because the poster was likely to be distressing.

• **Gay and lesbian rights:** Section 28 of

the Local Government Act of 1988 makes it a crime for local authorities to "promote" homosexuality or the teaching of "the acceptability of homosexuality as a pretended family relationship." Thus prejudice and discrimination against gays and lesbians have been given legitimacy in the law.

Section 28 was originally aimed at alleged proselytizing by homosexual schoolteachers, but it is turning out to have wider effects. The future of public housing for gay couples

GREAT BRITAIN

may be in doubt. Sex education in the schools may suffer. Government funding for counseling of people questioning their sexuality may be curtailed. And artistic and literary productions at public-funded schools and theaters are now open to censorship. Peter Thornton, a lawyer specializing in civil liberty issues, writes: "The Arts Council [a government body that funds the arts] has been advised the Section 28 prohibits almost any literary or artistic activity which has an element of homosexuality."

• **Head tax:** During the next two years local property taxes are scheduled to be replaced with a per-capita tax, or "community charge," payable at a flat rate by every adult living within each local authority area. The government apparently hopes the tax will make local government spending more accountable. But critics argue that, besides being highly regressive, the tax will seriously threaten individual privacy, because the government plans to use just about any means possible to compile a list with the name and address of every adult in Britain.

Tax collectors will be authorized to use electoral registers, library user lists, social security files, private investigators and any other sources of information available to develop the list. The phone company, British

Telecom, has offered to help set up a national computer database to keep track of the movements of the entire adult population. The company would report whenever a customer moved from one local government authority's jurisdiction to another.

To add insult to injury, tax assessors will collect highly personal information. Unmarried persons living together "as man and wife" will be jointly responsible for each others' tax; married persons not living together "as man and wife" (even if living under one roof) will not. Basically, it will be up to the government to determine who is sleeping with whom.

Why Britain, and why now? Several developments help explain the decline of civil liberties in Thatcher's Britain. The nation's constitutional framework is a key problem. The United Kingdom has no written constitution and no bill of rights. The electoral system does not provide proportional representation, so a minority can elect the government. Thatcher's Conservatives won control of the House of Commons in 1987 with only 46.2 percent of the vote. In the second chamber of Parliament, the House of Lords, a majority of the seats are hereditary. Thus the Lords is naturally weighted toward the Conservatives.

A new constitutional problem is the increasing prominence of the prime minister. Roy Jenkins, chancellor of Oxford University and former home secretary, has called this "a remarkable and exceptional concentration of power on one individual." Thatcher has watered down the tradition of Cabinet government, under which the entire Cabinet took collective responsibility for government decisions. And she has weakened the civil service and undermined local governmental authority (the best example being the abolition in 1985 of the Greater London Council, a central council that governed the city).

The Labour Party first called for the abolition of the House of Lords in 1935. Last October a group of writers, politicians and other eminent persons signed a list of demands titled Charter 88. Included among them were a written constitution, a bill of rights, proportional representation, reform of the House of Lords and the subjection of executive powers to rule of law. The charter gained hundreds of supporters within days, but it will likely prove ineffective until a Labour government is elected, which could be years off.

Gillian Peele, a political scholar at Oxford University, says that one factor working against civil rights campaigners is that protection of civil liberties is widely perceived as an issue of the left. The average citizen has more pressing worries, and the political parties do not think there are any votes in it.

Professor Dworkin writes that the low priority given to civil liberties in Britain is the root of the problem. "Thatcher's government places liberty at a much lower level: it makes freedom just another preference, just something that some people want a great deal more than most people do, just something else to be balanced out with an eye to majority opinion in the next election."

Each of the freedoms lost, he says, was bartered away for what was perceived to be a more pressing good. Thatcher did not set out deliberately to be a dictator or destroy freedoms. She simply deemed other commodities more valuable. If this is true, it may take a written constitution to preserve British liberty. Wherever the free market rules supreme, anything can be sold at the right price. □

Katie Richards is a London-based journalist.

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FOR 12 YEARS THE 48-INCH TRANS-ALASKA pipeline was a gun barrel leveled at Prince William Sound. Since 1977, when oil began pouring down from the North Slope, nearly 9,000 tankers departed the pipeline's Valdez terminal fat with crude. Each tanker, its load ranging to more than 50 million gallons, held the potential to kill the Sound.

Then on March 24, a tanker captain with too much to drink, an unqualified mate at the helm and pathetic oil cleanup preparations joined to pull the gun's trigger. The tanker *Exxon Valdez*, for reasons still not thoroughly explained, went aground miles out of the normal tanker route. More than 10 million gallons of oil bled from its holds and spread unchecked in one of the world's most magnificent bodies of water.

The Sound, if not dead, is bowed. Sea otters and birds lie dead on oil-blackened island beaches. Whales and sea lions suffer. Some multimillion-dollar fisheries are closed; others are threatened. Fishermen reel with anger.

Weeks of ineffective containment and clean-up efforts failed to stop the sheen from escaping the Sound, and it's now carving a path of death through the wildlife along the state's southern coast.

Oil—a feeding frenzy: Valdez, a beautiful town ringed by mountains, in any other year would quietly emerge from winter in March and April. Fishermen would ready boats and gear for the approaching season. Tour boat operators would clean and polish their vessels. But the worst oil disaster in North American waters turned all that on its head. The spill, for all the anger and frustration it provoked, thrust Valdez into a frenzied economic boom.

The town bursts with people, its population of 3,500 almost tripled. State environmental control officials have taken over the courthouse. Exxon Corp. has moved an army of people into an office building whose primary occupant was a chiropractor. An elementary school gymnasium has become an otter-cleaning station.

The town's civic center, converted to a media center, swarms with reporters from all over the world. The single-strip airport buzzes constantly with the comings and goings of airplanes and helicopters. Hundreds of volunteers and job-seekers pack restaurants, bars and hotels. Most sleep in tents or cars. In all, it's a frenetic scene reminiscent of pipeline construction days in the '70s.

Exxon, which owns the *Exxon Valdez*, pours millions into the town to keep it going. The industry giant said in the first days of the spill that it would pay cleanup expenses and make good on claims from those hurt financially. As a consequence, it has been billed for everything from the \$15,000-per-day cost of the Soviet Union's giant oil skimmer *Vaydaghubsky* to the \$300 tab state officials ran up for Chinese food. More than two dozen lawsuits have been filed against Exxon so far, most of them by fishermen claiming lost income. Exxon says it hasn't calculated its spending, nor will it provide an estimate of ultimate cleanup costs. Oil spill experts, though, predict the cost will exceed \$100 million—yet this total represents only a small fraction of Exxon's more than \$5.6-billion profits last year.

But while Valdez bustles, two of the state's major industries—tourism and fishing—brace for a shaky summer. Neither can be sure what the future holds, and the uncertainty compounds the frustration over the spill.

Tourism interests, which once showed off a spectacular fusion of land and water, now have a giant bathtub ring around their treasure. Some smaller businesses offering fishing, kayaking or sightseeing excursions say an oil-slimed Prince William Sound is turning off potential customers. But the larger cruise ships and tour boat operators report no cancellations so far. In fact, they say, the national attention spawned a kind of morbid curiosity, with some people wanting to see the spill and others saying they want to see Alaska before the rest of it is fouled.

The fishing industry stands helpless before the oil. Fishermen in the villages and communities on the Sound are watching the sheen choke their livelihoods. Millions of salmon fry due from hatcheries and rivers are

threatened, as is a \$75-million industry dependent on returning salmon. For some fishing villages, an entire way of life is jeopardized.

Fish marketers statewide face a difficult job convincing buyers outside the state that product quality from Alaska in general has not been damaged. Industry officials say they most fear a repeat of the botulism scare seven years ago, when all Alaskan fish were suspect.

Silent spring: But if spill consequences remain uncertain for some, the toll in wildlife and beauty is manifest on the shorelines and on the water. Oil and tar produced by crude oil's contact with water have fouled more than 800 miles of coastline so far.

Sheen fingers reach for bays, coves and

wild beaches, some of them cherished spots of boaters and kayakers. From the air, the efforts of a handful of skimmers and other vessels trying to pick up or corral the oil look pitiful. They are, in effect, trying to squeegee a 15,000-square-mile body of water.

Walking the shorelines of Prince William Sound's islands—at a time when, normally, the colors and noise of spring would be breaking out all around—calls to mind a messy mechanic's oil-changing pit. The spill smeared rocks and gravel with dirty, black slime resembling used motor oil with 10,000 miles on it. The smell is something belonging deep underground, in the filth and fires of hell, not among the Sound's mountains, unblemished snow and green spruce.



An oily sea bird waits its turn for a bath at an animal recovery center in Valdez, Alaska.

Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos

ALASKA AFTERMATH

In a high tide, the oil crawls up the beaches, laying on a new coat of swill that is smothering kelp, eel grass, mussels and clams. When the tide departs, it leaves birds and sea otters.

Death clenches most of the animals. The oil stiffened them into a black mass barely distinguishable from the rocks. It suffocated some, starved some by killing their food and poisoned some with its toxins. A few carcasses have been shredded by eagles attracted by an easy, though probably fatal, meal.

The worst ones to see are those found alive. For then the otters lie on their backs, rubbing their eyes or licking their stomachs, trying to groom themselves clean of the oil. The birds hunker down, too weak and too heavy with oil to stand. Their wings tremble in an apparent effort at flight.

If you fly your find back to Valdez, to the otter- or bird-cleaning station, the people there handle it like a human newborn. The feed it and medicate it and talk to it. Over and over again, they bathe it in Dawn detergent and warm water. They blow it dry with hair-dryers. These people talk of their tears and depression. But they bury those things in non-stop activity.

More than half the 100 or so otters brought in alive during the spill's first weeks died in their plywood cages. The oil's toxins afflicted the otters with emphysema, lung lesions, stomach ulcers and liver damage.

"They've been through an awful lot," says Dr. Randy Davis, who has come to Valdez from Sea World Research Institute in San Diego. "They don't stand much of a chance."

Beyond the dead and suffering wildlife, and beyond the damage to tourism and fishing, lies the intangible, spiritual blow dealt the state. The destruction here can't be measured in dollars. An island, for example, its shoreline slimed with oil, is a loss, certainly, but how do you measure it? Or how do you measure a sea otter's death? Or an eagle's? Alaskans feel these things in a deep and enduring way that may never heal.

Promises, promises: Exxon and Alyeska Pipeline Service Co., a consortium of oil companies that runs the pipeline and held responsibility for initial spill response, are taking most of the heat for the spill. The oil industry in general is also paying a price—and will pay more with the increased resistance to oil development the spill provoked.

The oil industry, after all, said such a spill would never occur—but it did. The industry said that even if such a spill did, by remote chance, occur, it could be controlled—but it wasn't. Weeks of oil roaming at will have made a sham of the industry's promises.

During pipeline planning and construction, the industry silenced critics by insisting its technology and commitment were sufficient to protect Alaska. Over the years the

industry continued to insist, time and again, it was ready, despite drills and small spills that revealed profound weaknesses in its ability to respond.

Almost immediately after the pipeline opened in mid-1977, the industry got its first test when 500 gallons of oil leaked from a tanker in Port Valdez. It failed. The state found the industry's response and cleanup plans in a "deplorable state."

Drill spills throughout the '80s revealed more problems. The state accumulated a stack of reports testifying to cleanup plans' faults. The industry's response to a 1987 spill in Cook Inlet and two more small spills early this year drew heavy criticism for not being up to the cleanup job.

Still, the industry clung to its stand, assuring Alaskans its precautions and plans were sufficient.

Then, when the *Exxon Valdez* spill occurred just after midnight on a Friday, Alaskans awoke that morning to oil already out of

control in the Sound—and to a realization of just how pitiful containment preparations were. Alyeska, whose plan called for having containment booms on the water within hours, did virtually nothing. Docked for repairs, the barge with the booms sat idle. For three days of calm, clear weather, oil oozed out over the Sound at will. In those three days, the sheen gained a grip on the Sound that has yet to weaken.

State environmental officials say that even if the struggle against the oil wasn't lost in the first hours when booms weren't deployed, it was lost in those three days.

Three weeks into the spill, Exxon finally produced a cleanup plan—a plan that Coast Guard Commandant Paul Yost said would take yet more weeks to implement fully. Fishermen immediately criticized the plan for its emphasis on washing beaches at the expense of cleaning up oil in the water. Other critics said it ignored oil that had escaped the Sound.

Moreover, when implementation began two weeks ago and workers swarmed over a few beaches with fire hoses, the tactic appeared to be failing. One beach that had been washed six times remained black with oil. And even at points where most of the surface oil had been removed, oil below ground level remained untouched. Scientists say the below-surface oil may continue to percolate up for years.

The spill has clearly demonstrated the oil industry's betrayal, but it's a betrayal accompanied by Alaskans' complicity. The record of Alaska politicians and bureaucrats standing up to the industry is a dismal one. Oil money flows into lawmakers' campaigns—and sympathetic laws flow out of the legislature. Regulatory agencies, hit with funding and manpower cuts when oil prices plunged, failed to do their job. Many Alaskans who grew used to the wealth the industry brought have grown complacent.

As one former industry regulator told a reporter, "We all allowed the grenade to be built. [Exxon Valdez Capt. Joseph] Hazelwood merely pulled the pin."

The spill has produced a new equation of oil power in Alaska. The public outpouring of anger has been overwhelming. Plans for new oil exploration—particularly in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and Bristol Bay—are getting new, closer study. Nobody says the oil industry should be drummed from the state, but critics have gained renewed credibility. Legislators who were once Big Oil's staunchest allies are promoting legislation aimed at slapping the industry with more controls.

No longer are Alaskans prepared to accept words and promises in lieu of aggressive, regulated spill protections. □

Terry Carr is an editorial writer for the *Anchorage Daily News*.



A member of the cleanup crew scrubs the oil-soaked rocks on Kikad Island in Prince William Sound.

UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos

EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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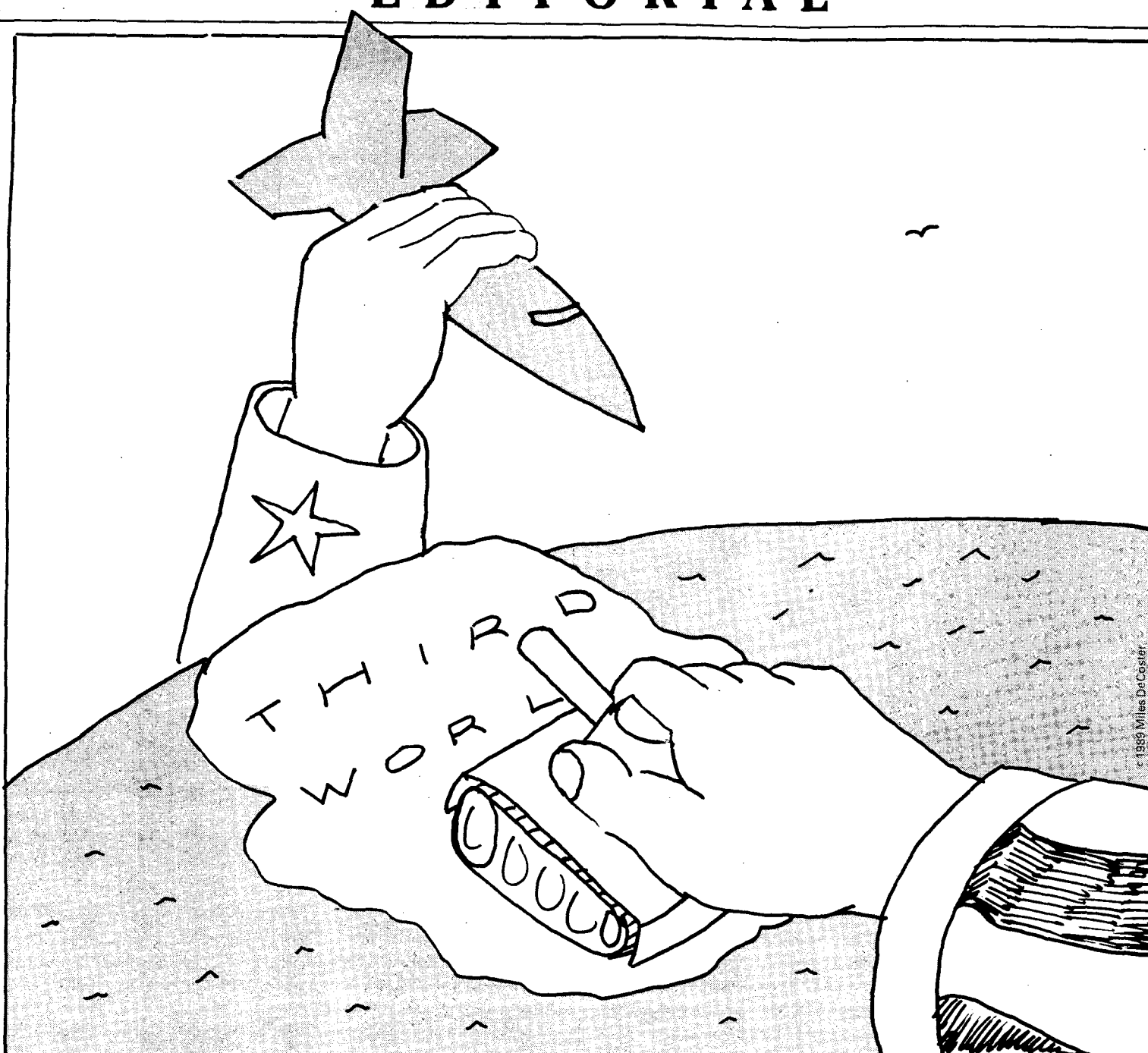
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As the Cold War winds down, it's time to stop arming the insurgents

Imagine this: in the presence of the Soviet ambassador, the top military and civilian leaders of Nicaragua meet and decide to order Salvadoran guerrilla forces to carry out a frontal assault on a strategically key city in El Salvador. No Salvadoran member of the FMLN is present, a high Nicaraguan official explains, because Nicaragua's military intelligence "is responsible for El Salvador's guerrillas."

Imagine that this has been true since 1979, when the Soviet Union decided to throw its full military support behind the rebels and to make the KGB Nicaragua's main partner in the Salvadoran civil war. For the past decade, the KGB has therefore provided arms, equipment and money—through the Sandinista directorate—to the FMLN.

The attack is set in motion by Nicaraguan President Daniel Ortega, who orders the intelligence directorate to proceed after a leading Nicaraguan military man says that too much time has gone by since Reagan left office without a significant rebel victory. Such a lag, the officer explains, is helping memories of the Reagan policies fade and will lead to Nicaragua being blamed for continuing a war the Bush administration had decided to soft-pedal. As a result the FMLN launches a full-scale assault toward San Salvador.

Imagine, too, that all this is reported as a lead story in the *New York Times*. If so, the uproar would be overwhelming. Nicaragua would be denounced for aggression against its neighbor. The Soviet threat to American security would be the subject of editorials and news broadcasts in all the media. Soviet professions of peaceful intentions would be mocked and its leaders denounced. An international crisis might well ensue.

And yet, this story did appear—almost word for word—as the lead story in the *New York Times* two Sundays ago. The only differ-

ence is that it was about Pakistan and Afghanistan, not Nicaragua and El Salvador. It was Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, not Ortega, and the CIA, not the KGB, that met, and they ordered the Afghan guerrillas to attack Jalalabad, the main city on the road to Kabul.

And, of course, there was no uproar. In fact, the story caused barely a ripple, either here in the United States or in the Soviet Union. Political leaders in both parties and the owners of our free press and TV were not perturbed. But then, why should they be? They assume that we and our client states have a god-given right to intervene massively in the internal affairs of other nations—even if they are on the very border of our still-arch rival (formerly enemy).

In fact, although the Pakistanis are denying the story, the Bush administration has implicitly confirmed it by telling Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze that we will stop running the war in Afghanistan if the Soviets will stop giving aid to Nicaragua. This is supposed to be a quid pro quo. But as Shevardnadze pointed out, the Soviets are not giving assistance to guerrillas, but to the government of Nicaragua, which is recognized even by the United States, and which has a right to buy arms from anyone. Indeed, it is the United States that has been arming the guerrilla forces there. Similarly, the United States still recognizes the government of Afghanistan, even while it is running the war against it.

In the past, both the Soviet Union and the United States have armed insurgent forces. This has increased international tensions, exacerbated the arms race and caused untold human suffering in the target countries. But now that the Cold War is winding down, it would be a good idea to reduce these tensions to a minimum and to use the resources that went into armaments for socially desirable purposes. To do so, however, will require honesty and consistency. American aid to the Afghan rebels is not equivalent to Soviet aid to Nicaragua. As far as we know, the Soviets are not now giving massive military aid to any insurgency. But the U.S. is, and it should stop doing so unilaterally.

If the Bush administration does stop, then it might negotiate with the Soviets in an attempt to agree to limits on military aid to Third-World governments. But it should stop hypocritically equating the two types of military aid.

LETTERS

Is she still beating her wife?

I WAS SOMEWHAT SHOCKED TO READ THE STORY BY Diana Johnstone (*JTT*, March 15) regarding the lessons of the "Rushdie flap," as she refers to it.

The implications in her ending statement, "Public freedom requires public responsibility," I find quite offensive and at odds with the concepts of freedom of expression and of thought and the realities of world politics. Her comments might be applicable if we were discussing something such as the availability of pornography to children, but the issue is much more basic than that and involves a fundamental right that is still sadly out of reach for the majority of the world's population.

Is she concerned about offending people such as Khomeini and the various Iranian religious leaders? Is she afraid of arousing the intolerance that so many societies seem to operate under? Is she prepared to justify the recent assassination in Belgium of an Islamic religious leader for daring to disagree with the official "Rushdie must die" position of the totalitarian fundamentalists in Tehran? Is she attempting to be an apologist for the inability of some nations to accept thoughts and beliefs that differ from the "accepted" official or unofficial norm?

I simply cannot accept those positions. Whether or not I personally agree with Rushdie, I defend his right to express himself in whatever form he chooses. Freedom of expression is an absolute. It exists, or it does not. There is no middle ground.

Edward M. Cambra
Lebanon, Ind.

Diana Johnstone replies: *There are risks of being misunderstood in writing something other than the usual clichés about a complex subject. Still, it seems to me that Edward Cambra could have found satisfactory negative answers to the questions he raises simply by a careful re-reading of my column. A careful reader would not start his protest by attributing to me an expression, "Rushdie flap," I never used. Not having paid attention to the words I used, he paid even less attention to the thoughts they were meant to convey. On the moral level, the need to defend Rushdie's right of expression is beyond question—and perfectly obvious. Is there any use in my pointing out that my statement about public freedom and responsibility was not advice to or about Rushdie, but an observation on the level of political history? Cambra makes me think of Goethe's remark that if people realized how little others understand what they say, they'd keep quiet.*

Editor's note: In regard to letters by Cambra, above, and DeVault, below, it should be noted that the *In These Times* headlines to which they refer are written by the managing editors, not the writers.

A kind of violence?

I WAS DISTRESSED BY THE RECENT "VIEWPOINT" BY Nanlouise Wolfe and Stephen Zunes, calling for "fresher and deeper consideration" of the abortion issue (*JTT*, March 29). Their discussion contains much with which I agree, but it is built around unexamined conservative assumptions about the mean-

ing of "morality."

What most disturbs me is the unanalyzed assertion that defending abortion puts us on "morally shaky ground." Wolfe and Zunes are too ready to accept prevailing notions of what might constitute a moral foundation for a position on abortion. They begin by asking us, quite reasonably, to take seriously the moral concerns of anti-abortionists. But instead of discussing these concerns explicitly, they simply accept a view of abortion as inherently "violent" as the only "moral" position on this issue. We have long had moral arguments for as well as against abortion (and other) rights for women. Abortion can be defended on the moral ground of respect for the full personhood of a woman (even when she is pregnant), and by giving as much moral weight to the decision to continue a pregnancy as the decision to end it.

To my mind, "fresher and deeper" thinking about abortion must explore fully our understandings of women as persons who give birth. With Wolfe and Zunes, I believe that we must not simply dismiss the moral concerns of anti-abortionists, that abortion is only part of a much larger problem and that capitalism is "anti-pregnancy." However, I am not convinced that we must agree that "abortion is violence." Whether and in what sense abortion (or its restriction) constitutes a kind of violence is precisely the kind of moral question that needs clarification.

Marjorie DeVault
Syracuse, N.Y.

Nicaragua trauma

THANKS FOR JIM NAURECKAS' SUMMARY OF THE behind-the-scenes sellout by congressional "liberals" that resulted in the bipartisan agreement on contra aid expected to pass in both houses (*JTT*, April 5).

I do question, however, his reference to the pardon of 1,800 former Nicaraguan national guard members as a "minor concession" by Managua. Releasing these detested criminals into society was a major concession on Daniel Ortega's part, and one that has alienated some of the revolution's most loyal supporters.

A good friend of mine in Nicaragua reports that Ortega's speech announcing the release was his shortest to date, since many in the audience turned and left, after shouting, "No, no!" upon hearing the news. Several days later my friend observed a woman at a picnic go berserk when she saw nearby a former national guard member whom she recognized from prerevolutionary days. The suffering and death of family members at the hands of these Somoza henchmen is

still fresh in the minds of many. Coming now in the wake of the destruction of Hurricane Joan and recent government austerity measures, the government's efforts to provide land and jobs for these former guardsmen are resented by people who are themselves struggling to survive.

Another risk inherent in freeing these men is the support they will likely provide for anti-government forces seeking—with CIA aid—to destabilize the government. Like the granting of total amnesty to returning contras, which has been going on for many months, this should be recognized as a courageous step by the Sandinista government in its search for peace for its war-weary people. How much more is the U.S. going to demand from them before we lift the embargo and stop funding the contras?

Cecile Meyer
DeKalb, Ill.

Downer

REGARDING THE PENTAGON-NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the Humanities (NEH) link (*JTT*, April 12): Lynne Cheney is engraved on my mind as the Reagan appointee to the NEH who so radically changed its direction that she withdrew the NEH name from a program it heavily funded—the PBS/BBC WETA production *The Africans*, a telecourse with Ali Mazrui as host. As I recall, she described it as anti-Western. The fact that it vividly shows the ravages of capitalism in Africa was probably its principal offense. Its second was in making favorable comparisons of Moslems over Christians in respect to slavery. Tom Engelhardt got it backwards—the danger of a Pentagon-NEH alliance is not that the arts and humanities will write about the Pentagon, but that they will write for the Pentagon, with, yes, all the new technologies at their fingertips.

Frieda Werden
Co-producer, WINGS radio news and
coordinating editor, *The Africans: A Reader*
(Mazrui & Levine, Praeger, 1986)
San Francisco

Tongue-tied

AS A CHARTER AND CARD-CARRYING MEMBER OF America-R-U-S, I would like to thank David J. Irvine for so vividly demonstrating the extraordinary expressiveness of the English language as a result of its promiscuous borrowing from about every other language on the globe ("Unbroken English," *JTT*, March 29). Is it any wonder that it is the most ubiquitous language spoken on Earth today? Isn't it a wonderful privilege to have

it for a common language? What better language could have been chosen for a nation so polyglot in nature? Just think: I can read the Constitution just as it was written, the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights; I never have to fear that some subtle quality of interpretation might be lost in translation. And the language seems so equal to the task of expressing the precise nuances of what these men of the colonies were attempting to declare.

The very word "democracy" is of Greek origin; yet isn't it profound that throughout the world's history the concept for which the word was born is so compatible with the political philosophy of those who speak the English language? Could this be because a language and what its subtle nuances can convey has much influence on the genesis of ethnic character?

I found it more than interesting that in the same issue there is a somewhat relevant article about Mexico. In the fourth paragraph of that article the first sentence was instructive, to say the least. I quote: "Death to the usurper"—meaning Salinas—appears in large letters on many walls." This seems a rather drastic and undemocratic disposition of one's political opposition. I mean, like I despaired of dear Ronnie with the depth of passion of my first sexual conquest—but all I wanted was for him to lift his doddering and nitwitted self up in the saddle and ride off into the sunset (a case of one's horse's ass toting another) where he could spend his days harmlessly napping and venting his militant frustrations against the hungry by attacking the California flora with his trusty ax.

In the last paragraph of the same article, "Mexico," the author, Elizabeth Martinez, reminds us that Mexico is still a dictatorship. Yes, dear Liz, and for many a moon. Could this have anything to do with national character vis-à-vis the limited political vision inherent in the language?

David J. Irvine, in his most facetious piece of drivel, takes pains to remind us that Britain has no official language. So convince me that the Parliament conducts its business in Swahili, or that English children are taught about the Magna Carta in Eskimo.

Lloyd Reinbeau (it's French)
Frazeyburg, Ohio

Correction

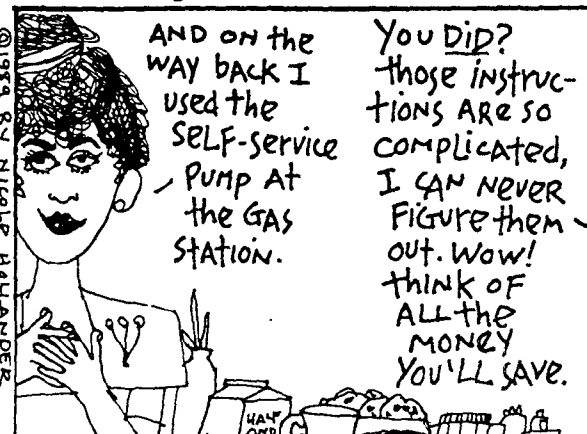
Due to an editing error, the April 19 story on labor media insufficiently identified Karen Keiser, who was quoted in the story. She is communications director for the Washington State Labor Council and producer of the cable TV show *Washington Works*.

SYLVIA



THIS IS AMAZING, WONDERFUL. DRIVING TO THE AIRPORT IS JUST ABOUT THE WORST THING IN THE WORLD, BUT YOU DID IT. YOU'RE A FRIEND IN A MILLION.

by Nicole Hollander



VIEWPOINT

By J. Quam-Wickham
& N. Quam-Wickham

How strong labor unions can lead to a clean environment

COULD THE EXXON VALDEZ DISASTER have been averted? The answer to that question may have been determined in 1935, when a West Coast strike by maritime workers was crushed. A few years later a key coalition in the strike, the Maritime Federation of the Pacific, died. As a result, workers on tankers for the big oil shippers are now frequently represented by company unions that are generally subservient to employers on workplace rules as well as health and safety issues.

Such a union represented the crew of the *Exxon Valdez*—and it's fair to wonder what would have happened aboard the tanker on March 24 had a strong, independent union been there instead. For starters, good union representation would have permitted a junior officer to steer for a captain who was apparently drunk. And good union representation might have meant that the captain's reputed drinking problem would have been addressed before the accident. It would have also meant that the captain would have had legal and organizational backup after the accident, thus making it harder for Exxon to find a fall guy to divert public attention from its own negligence.

Labor against pollution: Indeed, some labor organizations—such as the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU)—have been at the forefront of the fight for better environmental standards for the oil-shipping industry. A year ago the *Labor Occupational Health*

Program Monitor published a case study in regulating oil polluters. The *Monitor* story, written by one of the authors of this article, demonstrated the need to oppose the air pollution that occurs when oil vessels load their cargoes, venting toxic oil fumes into the atmosphere. The article reviewed environmental and occupational health issues at petroleum docks like the one in Valdez, Alaska.

Nearly 100 million tons of crude oil are loaded annually in the port of Valdez, according to a report by the National Academy of Sciences. Loading that amount of crude oil would cause about 13,000 tons of air pollutants to be released each year.

Thanks to grass-roots pressure and an extraordinarily vigorous district staff, the San Francisco Bay Area Air Quality Management District has now passed one of the best tank vessel vapor recovery rules in the country. It appears that local oil shipping companies will have to recover air pollutants released from ships and barges.

The ILWU monthly newspaper, *The Dispatcher*, has recently filled its pages with this and other safety issues. ILWU Warehouse Local 26 is actively advocating safety issues in Southern California, where it is insisting upon even tougher regulations, since air quality there is so much worse. Tony Mazzocchi, from the Oil, Chemical and

Atomic Workers (OCAW), has also indicated a strong interest in the emissions controversy. Once again, this time because of the *Exxon Valdez* disaster, unionists are calling for tankers to have tug escorts in case of emergency.

But labor must not forget that our alliance with the Citizens for a Better Environment and the West County Toxics Coalition has achieved what labor alone could not. Similar coalitions against pollution can be developed in Valdez and elsewhere.

In Valdez, environmental and health scientists will be collecting data by land, by sea and by air. The data will illuminate the basis for citizen and legal action. Regular public community meetings are needed for citizens working in the Sound, including fishermen, oil and transport workers, environmental activists, marine scientists, social scientists, economists, political representatives and regulatory agencies.

The oil industry must be prevented from managing the news or controlling scientific conclusions. Thus, workers on the Valdez cleanup should be guaranteed freedom of speech without the threat of being fired.

Was Exxon drunk? Blame for the Valdez oil spill has been heaped on the ship's captain. He was drunk, the media and Exxon point out. His automobile driver's license was suspended. He wasn't on the bridge.

The third mate didn't have a Valdez pilot's license. It was human error, they say. Let us examine the labor practices of oil shipping companies. Could it be that oil shippers' personnel practices are a prior form of human error?

Where are the scientific studies on the effect of sea watches—working four hours on and eight hours off, or six hours on and six hours off? When company dispatchers force seafarers back to the ships after shore leaves that are too short, what are the effects on crew morale, on tanker safety? If a ship's officers must deal with the effects of management practices that run roughshod over the social and family lives of seafarers, how much good morale can honest workers achieve?

Getting a job is rough, for licensed officers and unlicensed sailors alike. While some seamen wait for months—even years—in union hiring halls for a regular income, this nation's several maritime academies annually produce far more graduates than there are jobs.

Thus, seafarers on the ships are likely to take big risks in an effort to keep their jobs, even if tanker safety is involved, even if they need alcohol rehabilitation. Without independent unions to back up seafarers, tanker safety, seafarers' health and the environment are jeopardized.

J. Quam-Wickham is a member of the Inland-boatmen's Union, ILWU, and N. Quam-Wickham teaches at the University of California, Berkeley. Both have worked aboard tankers in the Port of Valdez, on offshore geophysical vessels and on salmon and herring net boats.

"Deeply moving testimony, seldom heard, of survivors who were pilloried by our witch-hunters. It is a piece of history uncovering a shameful moment. More important it is a necessary work."—Studs Terkel

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By Roger Bybee

IMAGINE NEWS CORRESPONDENTS HAILING the impact of the first atomic bomb for clearing the way for Hiroshima's future growth. That comparison, admittedly extreme, conveys the flavor of much recent news coverage of the Chrysler shutdown in Kenosha, Wis. The closing ended 5,500 jobs just four days before last Christmas and occurred despite Chrysler's firm pledges, written and oral, that it intended to stay in Kenosha for at least five years.

The impact of this massive shutdown on a city of 77,000 might have been expected to generate coverage of the resulting social devastation. One might also have anticipated that the largest shutdown in Wisconsin history would elicit public discussion of policy issues, especially that of public control over the conduct of corporations that, like Chrysler, ignore commitments to workers and taxpayers as they shift jobs around the globe in search of higher profits.

But instead of serious assessment of the impact of the shutdown, mainstream media coverage has been characterized by a "don't worry, be happy" approach. And discussion of policy has narrowly focused on adjustment strategies. Questions of public involvement in corporate investment decisions have been ignored.

The coverage of the likely impact of the shutdown has carried an implicit assumption that Kenosha will somehow be immune to the devastation experienced in other medium-sized factory towns affected by major shutdowns. Here's a sampling of themes that have dominated coverage:

Welcome chance for diversification: Two days after the shutdown was announced, the *New York Times*' John Holusha quoted local corporate and government officials as welcoming Chrysler's move, because the \$14-an-hour average pay at Chrysler had "disrupted economic growth." The company's high wage standard allegedly discouraged investment. But the *Times* did not balance this view by quoting local union or community leaders.

Predictably, all of the new opportunities for diversification—a dog-racing track, a new lakefront marina and the expansion of discount and retail malls along I-94—are certain to provide jobs that offer only a fraction of the wages that Chrysler provided.

The day after the closing, the *Times*' Doro P. Levin described the shutdown as "occasion for surprising expressions of relief and optimism in this industrial city on Lake Michigan." The article included a photo of a presumably former worker captioned, "I hated my job," and quotes Kenosha Mayor Patrick Moran claiming, "Generally, I don't think the town's too upset." This account somehow neglected to mention a September 22, 1988, meeting that Moran had to leave under heavy police escort because 2,000 autoworkers furiously objected to his refusal to sue Chrysler for breach of contract.

A public TV show called *Smith and Company* devoted a three-part series to "some of the positive aspects of the plant closing," such as "the freedom to direct resources and energies to other areas of potential growth." Where such resources will come from when Kenosha will suffer an annual payroll loss of \$171 million, along with \$208 million in lost tax revenues and new outlays

Press sees social disaster as investment opportunity

caused by the shutdown—is not suggested. While there will be a trickle of resources from Chrysler's reparations package of \$4 million to \$10 million (but widely reported as \$250 million), it will come nowhere near filling the massive crater left by Chrysler's decision to pull out of Kenosha.

Levin's *Times* article seemed even to portray the shutdown as an opportunity for self-determination. Quoting a local development official, a large subhead stated, "After years of boom and bust, 'the community has taken control.'"

An alternative explanation of the shutdown—that it signaled the community's utter lack of control over Lee Iacocca and Chrysler—was absent from Levin's story.

Rebirth as a 'paradise': Chrysler's plan to demolish some factory buildings and create a grassy park (which could serve as a land bank for future commercial opportunities) unleashed a torrent of enthusiasm in the February 5 *Milwaukee Journal*. "Plant razing signals rebirth," blared the headline. "In Kenosha, they'll pave over a plant and put up paradise," the article said. This Chrysler-planned "paradise" was contrasted with the existing "rodent-ridden buildings." The fact that those buildings provided weekly sustenance to 5,500 families seemed of little consequence.

Thus, the shutdown's impact has been ludicrously minimized in mainstream media coverage. A communitywide disaster has been treated as a minor barrier to the certain affluence that lies just over the horizon in a new, diversified local economy based on tourism, services and retail trade. And the real picture of the massive impoverishment that results when a factory town loses its largest and highest-paying employer has disappeared.

So, too, have the policy lessons from the shutdown. Policy debate has largely remained limited to the union's alleged resistance to change, the plant's age and the adequacy of local economic development efforts to compensate for the loss of jobs. The mainstream media has seemingly relied on a microscope to examine the behavior of an elephant. Issues like the shift of jobs from the U.S. to low wage plants abroad, the linkage between public subsidies and corporate commitments, and the absence of effective worker and community control over corporate investment decisions—have been assiduously avoided.

Instead, and even though Iacocca and Chrysler had absolved the union and workforce of blame in early statements, the media has focused on the union's alleged fault in the shutdown.

The *Milwaukee Journal's* front-page headline on February 11 declared, "Union killed deal to keep Kenosha plant open." Significantly, the headline did not attribute that accusation to any source. According to the article, Chrysler executive Joseph Cappy "disclosed" that United Auto Workers Local 72 rejected an offer that would have guaranteed auto production in Kenosha. That apparent revelation was spectacular, since it ran counter to 12 months of public condemnations of Lee Iacocca for betraying Wisconsin.

sin. The "disclosure" gained added credence because it was "confirmed" by "a highly placed Local 72 official."

But subsequent investigation revealed that Cappy and the anonymous source were telling separate, though parallel, stories about different rounds of negotiations, and therefore did not "confirm" each other. Each version suffered from a basic implausibility, as well as a lack of corroborating evidence. Yet, despite the obvious disintegration of the grave charges against the union, the *Milwaukee Journal* never corrected the impressions created by its biased headline and sloppily written story.

The natural disaster thesis: Initially the mainstream media echoed some of the accusations of deceit and betrayal voiced by public officials when the shutdown was announced. But as Chrysler delayed the shutdown for six months and dangled a very

But Chrysler's shutdown of its Kenosha plant is also seen as an act of God.

modest reparations package before them, public officials pulled back from their unusual criticism of a major corporation and began to talk about the shutdown as a natural disaster. Extensive attention was given to the Kenosha facilities' age—the 86-year-old "ancient and badly outmoded" plant, as the *New York Times* put it. The fact that the Kenosha operation had received a \$200-million retooling by Chrysler, that it was profitable and that the Kenosha workforce produced high-quality work was conveniently ignored.

This natural-disaster framework reflects a basic misunderstanding about plant closings. Corporations do not shut down plants because they are old, but because they see a more profitable opportunity elsewhere. The Kenosha facilities were still profitable. If the Kenosha buildings had been newer, they still might have been shut down. A

comprehensive study of plant shutdowns by Duke University professor Roger Schmenner revealed that the median age of shut-down plants is just 15 years. A full third have been six years old or newer.

A more helpful approach: Understanding the Chrysler shutdown requires looking at the global workings of the corporation. The Kenosha shutdown was directly linked to two other moves: the shift of Omni and Horizon production from Kenosha to Detroit, where a new plant is being planned, and by a transfer of Reliant K-car production from Detroit to Mexico.

This failure to cover either the Detroit or Mexico angles is particularly striking, because the planned Detroit plant has been so controversial. The new plant will be built with more than \$190 million in taxpayer subsidies, although it was originally projected to provide 700 to 1,200 fewer jobs than the existing plant. (A recent decision by Chrysler will add more jobs to the plant.)

A major scandal has also erupted over a land deal connected with the new plant. At Chrysler's insistence, the city of Detroit purchased for \$42 million a parcel of land containing dilapidated buildings and factory equipment worth about \$2.4 million. Yet despite the direct link between the Detroit project and the Kenosha shutdown, the scandal has been mentioned in just two brief *Milwaukee Journal* articles.

The third leg of Chrysler's three-cornered move—the shift of jobs from Detroit to a low-wage plant in Toluca, Mexico, has also attracted little media attention. Yet that move raises questions about the morality of shifting jobs away from American communities in order to exploit low-wage (\$1-\$2 an hour) Mexican workers, and about the role that firms like Chrysler play in determining the policies of the Mexican government.

In effect, Chrysler has pulled off a triple play: it has abandoned workers in Kenosha despite firm promises, shifted jobs out of Detroit despite obtaining major giveaways from a financially desperate city, and transferred work to Mexico, where it can exploit low-wage workers. Such a perspective on Chrysler's activities has never been debated in the mainstream media.

Roger Bybee is the editor of *Racine Labor*, a Wisconsin weekly newspaper.

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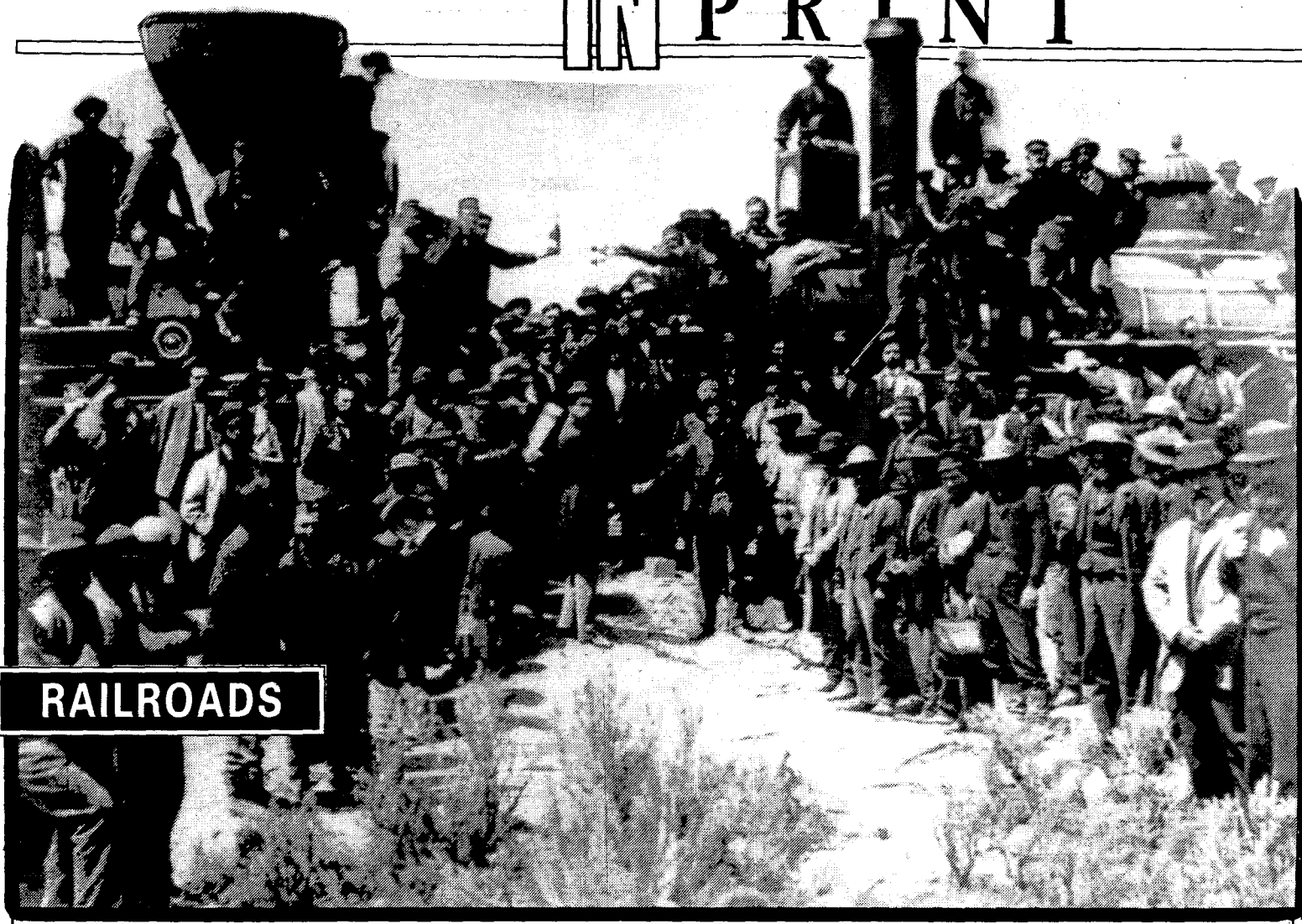
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RAILROADS

Tracking American romanticism and the industrial ethos through U.S. art: sometimes a railroad is more than a railroad.

The Railroad in American Art: Representations of Technological Change
 Edited by Susan Danly & Leo Marx
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 218 pp., \$39.95

By Karen Rosenberg

Art of technology: the mythic American trains of thought

RUDOLF ARNHEIM, IN *VISUAL Thinking*, his famous book on the psychology of art, tells the story he found in a newspaper about a Detroit minister who took his four-year-old son to see a new mural in a local school auditorium. "That track," explained the father, "is the future coming toward us. The train is this country's unity, far off but bearing down on us." "No," replied the young boy, "it's a train."

Arnheim explains this family conflict by noting that a train is, first and foremost, a piece of railway

equipment, and only secondarily a symbol. Fortunately, the contributors to the collection of essays entitled *The Railroad in American Art* know that a train is not always a train.

Tracking the wild metaphor: Indeed, it can mean many things. National unity, the Detroit minister's interpretation, is certainly one of them, because, as cultural historian Leo Marx points out in this volume, the building of the American railroads coincided with the final phase of the European occupation of the continent. "Luckily for us," wrote Ralph

Waldo Emerson, "now that steam has narrowed the Atlantic to a strait, the nervous, rocky West is intruding a new and continental element into the national mind, and we shall yet have an American genius." Yet for some reason, this theme gets short shrift in this book, and the authors, most of them art historians, tend to see the railroad exclusively as a symbol of industrialization.

The linking of the train and the factory is based, in part, on another coincidence of American history mentioned by Leo Marx: in the U.S.—as opposed to Britain, for

example—the coming of the railroads and the Industrial Revolution happened more or less simultaneously. But when Americans saw Andrew Joseph Russell's celebrated photograph of two engines facing each other on one track, a work that recorded and symbolized the joining of the Atlantic and Pacific through the meeting of the Union Pacific and the Central Pacific railroads, I'd be willing to bet they thought about more than the triumph of technology over nature.

According to Susan Danly, it is not clear whether the Union Pacific Railroad hired Russell to travel west in the late 1860s to capture such photo opportunities, but it did publish his work. But other artists—painters as well as photographers—were commissioned outright and sent on junkets. Railroads wanted images to promote tourism, interest investors and show the federal government that expansion west was possible. The frequent result was a sort of "Capitalist Realism" (to borrow a term coined by an analyst of advertising): a style that, like Socialist Realism, shows less what is, than what is a desired ideal. In the mid-19th century, pictures of a railroad that gently blends into the landscape, disturbing neither flora nor fauna, were only occasionally countered by images of a gaping clearing and smoke billowing from a locomotive. (These elements made George Inness' "The Lackawanna Valley," circa 1855, a disturbing picture that didn't please the railroad that commissioned it, says Nicolai Cikovsky Jr. here.)

I don't mean to imply that celebration of the train was entirely en-

gineered from above, for there was a strong belief in 19th-century America that technology could create a more placid environment than the wilderness that God had created. Whether all Americans of that era accepted the ideology of technology as unmitigated progress is another question, however.

Romantic ramifications: Leo Marx observes that until the 1960s most historians would have answered that question with a resounding "yes." Henry David Thoreau, who feared the train's delivery of "restless city merchants" into the country towns, was one of those dissenters written off as exceptions to the rule. Searching in vain for the storm and strife of European class struggle, historians generally overlooked the possibility that America's Romantic veneration of nature might be a nostalgic lament for an already lost paradise. As the growth of the idea of the "noble savage" coincided with the destruction of the Native Americans (a point stressed in Kenneth Maddox's contribution to this book), so pastoral images of America's natural beauty can be seen as a reaction to rapid industrialization.

The somber reflections on technology that are understated in Inness' "The Lackawanna Valley" became more obvious with the Depression, as fear about America's economy grew. Gail Levin, in her essay on Edward Hopper's railroad imagery, finds that his train tracks suggest the rootlessness as well as the con-

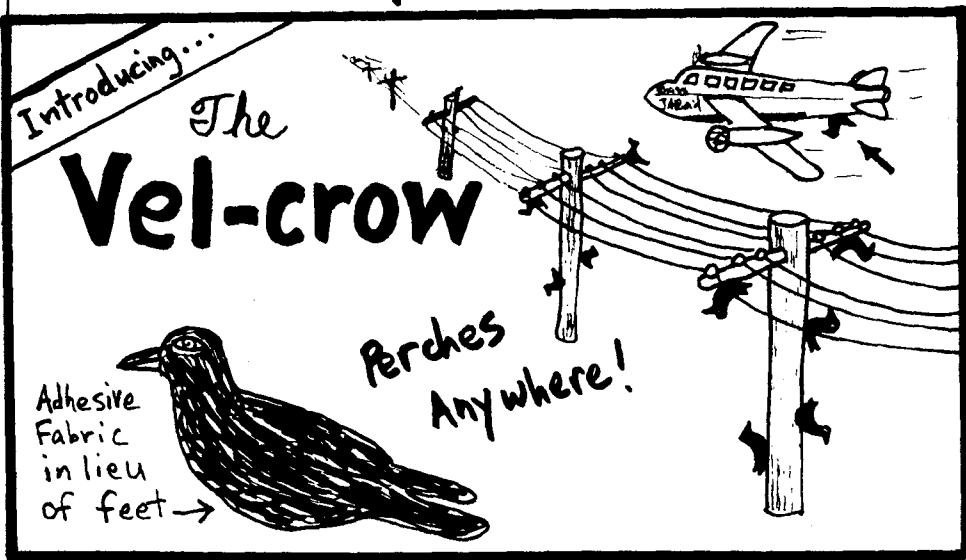
Pastoral images of natural beauty can be seen as a reaction to rapid industrialization.

tinuity of modern life. Hopper's preference for the melancholy light of evening connotes, she writes, a lost opportunity or the death of a dream.

The dream of a railroad may have faded in America, but our ambivalent romance with other forms of technology has not subsided. As a result, this book tells us about the present as well as the past. Recently the cover of *Technology Review*, a journal published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, showed a nuclear power plant nestled into the lush green countryside near an old farm that is ostensibly undisturbed by its presence. Sound familiar? Countless car ads help us depend on the automobile for a sense of freedom, relaxation and power. When we learn how to read the implicit messages in images of technology, we may be a little more free of many myths.

Karen Rosenberg, a frequent contributor to *In These Times*, often writes on the relationship between technology and culture.

It wasn't broken, but they fixed it anyway!
Science Improves Nature



Landslide: The Unmaking of the President, 1984-1988
By Jane Mayer and Doyle McManus
Houghton Mifflin, 468 pp., \$21.95

By Bud Kenworthy

PRESIDING OVER A CELEBRATION for the renovated Statue of Liberty on July 4, 1986, "Reagan seemed to rise beyond partisan politics, beyond his own image as a conservative ideologue," according to Jane Mayer and Doyle McManus in *Landslide*. With his ratings in the polls never higher, Reagan fused with America. At this "grand, patriotic gala, it was hard to be sure which national symbol was being celebrated more."

Earlier that year the White House bombed Libya and turned Congress around on military aid to the contras. A major economic reordering lay on the other side of a recent landslide re-election. Reagan's popularity had been harnessed to an agenda. The man ruled, not merely reigned. Mainstream commentators let out a sigh of relief: the country was governable again.

Six months after that Fourth of July, Reagan seemed so psychologically incapacitated that a Washington insider who interviewed White House aides wondered if the 25th Amendment shouldn't be invoked. In three years the president passed from an electoral landslide (49 states, more popular votes than any other candidate had received) to something more analogous to a geologic landslide, as public trust gave way with each new revelation in the unfolding Iran-contra scandal. In this book two Washington-based journalists provide a detained account of that debacle.

The enduring question is, what failed? Was Iran-contra the product of a president with a soft heart for American hostages? Did the failure lie, as the Tower Commission suggested, in the president's loose management style? Or, as Congress believed, in an imperial presidency's disdain for power-sharing? Or does Iran-contra approach Greek tragedy, in that what failed was inherent in what worked? Was one landslide connected to the other?

It is commonplace in books on the Reagan presidency to say the man was lazy, inattentive to paperwork, unwilling to make tough decisions. All that appears in *Landslide*, but with this twist: we also are given a Reagan hard at work, bringing "self-discipline and myriad skills to the White House; they simply were not the skills usually associated with the job."

Hard-working Reagan: Reagan spent his evenings memorizing speeches others wrote, going over cue cards others provided for the next day's events. As he completed a task on each day's agenda, Reagan meticulously crossed it off and drew an arrow to his next entrance, as actors do. The color-coded cue cards would remind him of the identities of his own officials or provide

Team Reagan lets democracy slide



a joke to use in greeting in dignity. There were also cards to use when phoning, with spaces for jotting down what the other party said, so staff would know what transpired.

Tape was placed on the White House floor so the president would know where to stand and whom to face. After private conversations with other world leaders, a press aide might write the lines Reagan should have said but didn't and pass these to the press corps. Attention was paid to lighting and to camera angles. Every day Reagan worked out in the White House gym.

That kind of acting took discipline, but the real work was projecting a persona not Reagan's own. "Reagan was larger than life, yet voters had an extraordinary affection for him as a man. They were inspired by his optimism, and they responded to his warmth and humor. They felt he was more trustworthy than other politicians. They thought he had backbone." That was the persona.

Reagan the man was indecisive, notorious for agreeing with whoever last talked to him, likely to sign anything an aide thrust before him. The real Reagan was solitary, spending most evenings watching TV with Nancy as they ate dinner off trays. The real Reagan reduced complex societal and global problems to sentimental stories about individuals culled from clippings sent him in the mail. (He spent more hours each week reading staff-selected mail than talking to the secretary of state.)

When Reagan uncharacteristically crossed the line between person and persona by trying to write his own speech to the nation after the Reykjavik summit, his national security adviser was furious at the impertinence and trashed the "low-level, brainless thing." This discrepancy between persona and person was symbolized by Reagan's unwillingness to shed his jacket in the Oval Office. Other presidents also have felt intimidated on entering this lofty post, but unlike them, Reagan seems never to have overcome his inner sense of inadequacy. And rightly so, for Reagan never became president, he only acted it.

Teaming minions: Here we come to a fork in interpretation. How much of what's been described thus far is unique to Ronald Reagan, the first actor to become president? What follows is more my analysis than the authors', but it is consistent with data they provide. Reagan was part of a team that formed in California in the '60s. On its slow, steady ascent to the White House, Team Reagan acquired some of the best pollsters, media people and PR flacks in the business.

California anticipated what the rest of the nation became by the '80s. It was a media-conscious state with a volatile electorate. Party organizations and identifications were weak. Team Reagan was the first to understand what it takes to win under such conditions and the first to realize that what works in electoral campaigns works in office. Team Reagan

gave us what Sidney Blumenthal was perspicacious enough to call in 1981 "the permanent campaign."

Combine polling and demographics with trials in test markets, sophisticated media and packaging, and what do you get? In the private sector it's called advertising. In politics it sells just the same. Team Reagan learned how to present the public with choices it couldn't refuse. In marketing the product (policy), it learned how much it helps to sell the brand (president). Reagan's private pollster Richard Wirthlin developed a "speech pulse" system in which the involuntary reactions of test audiences to individual words were calibrated then printed out on the draft of the text. Speeches would then be loaded with "power phrases."

Other presidents have felt intimidated by the job, but, unlike them, Reagan never overcame his feelings of inadequacy.

"Media event" took on a new meaning as actions carried out by mercenaries hired by the CIA were attributed to the contras and timed to coincide with congressional

votes. Libya was bombed after a secret poll showed that this would boost the president's popularity, which it did. These are just a few of the techniques *Landslide* describes.

A staff affliction: What gets candidates elected tends to spread like ice-nine through U.S. politics, where "winning is the name of the game." Bush's 1988 campaign mirrored Reagan's earlier two, with James Baker playing a leading role in all three. Once in office, can we expect candidates not to use techniques that got them there? What if what gets them there nowadays is the kind of team effort perfected by Reagan, where ad-savvy professionals take over and run "the perfect candidate. He does whatever you want him to do" (Reagan campaign manager Edward Rollins).

With a Jim Baker as chief of staff, doesn't this work well enough to permit the team to persist through a succession not only of elections but of "perfect candidates?" Has something approaching this not happened with Bush? If so, did Iran-contra matter?

Thus Reagan's biography and personality are irrelevant. He is but one variant in a class of hollow men willing to fulfill the "presidential" role this new system requires, although what came naturally to him others may have to learn.

Teams so attuned to appearances—so unwilling to accept realities they dislike since reality always can be changed through advertising (or so they think)—may precipitate future Iran-contra crises. That is the Greek tragedy interpretation hinted at in the close of this book: "It was as if the houselights had come on too early, the artifice laid bare."

But evidence in *Landslide* persuades me otherwise. The Bakers and the Wirthlins did not want Reagan to mess with Central America or Iran. Opinion polls told them that these waters were too dangerous. After the first team got tired or cocky (e.g., Baker's moving from chief of staff to Treasury), the second string took over: the go-for-broke true believers personified by Bill Casey, Pat Buchanan and Oliver North. That need not have happened and, under Bush, probably will not.

As Neil Postman pointed out in *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, guarding against Orwell's 1984 America slides into Huxley's *Brave New World*—a world in which politics and news are entertainment, and in which publics willingly ratify choices they think they've made but actually were conned into. "In the Huxleyan prophecy, Big Brother does not watch us, by his choice. We watch him, by ours."

Bud Kenworthy teaches government at Cornell University and is currently writing a book on advertising in U.S. foreign policy.

IN THESE TIMES MAY 3-9, 1989 19

FILM



Director of the documentary *Cane Toads* Mark Lewis with one of his stars: an ambiguous tale of endearing ecological monsters.

By Pat Aufderheide

Video alternatives all over the map

ACCESIBLE VIDEO TECHNOLOGY means that more people are able to produce videotapes and more people are able to view them in their homes. The stage in between—distribution—is much less well-developed. In hopes of helping bridge that gap, *In These Times* continues here its survey of recent social issue videos, some of them one-time projects by amateurs, and others projects by film and video veterans.

Latin America: *Peace Peeping Up*, an hour-long documentary largely funded by U.S. religious groups and made by veteran independent filmmaker Ana Carrigan (*Roses in December*), recounts the recent history of Nicaragua's eastern coast. The understated narrative and frank interviews with civilians and military commanders tell a story of naiveté, misunderstanding, destruction and intrigue—all exercised on the region's indigenous populations. Focusing on the Miskito Indians, the video traces the peace process between the Sandinista government and the people of the coast. As is described without hortatory rhetoric, this process was complicated by the U.S. government, which used some indigenous factions in its support for the contra resistance. But early blunders by the Sandinistas that resulted in brutality toward civilians are not minimized, nor are the confusions of indigenous people perplexed by "leaders" who rarely appeared in Nicaraguan villages or border refugee camps. Distributed by First Run/Icarus Films (200 Park Ave. South, #1319, New York, NY 10003), the video is an excellent background and a rare bit of good news in a region whose divisions and

conflicts are typically the news that surfaces to the North.

Building Peace in the Midst of War illustrates the crisis in El Salvador, where a fifth of the population has been driven out of towns and off farms, mostly by government actions. It documents how one U.S. solidarity group has responded. Cambridge, Mass., residents carried food and medical supplies to the people of San Jose Las Flores, a town evacuated by the Salvadoran army in an Operation Phoenix-like counterinsurgency program. The delegation's problems with the Salvadoran government and unhelpful U.S. Embassy reflect in miniature the problems of the Las Flores residents, who by resettling their town are resisting the military and government and are put at risk in a war zone. Delegation member Carol Yourman's low-tech, first-person video style is adequate to the material. The half-hour video that premiered last autumn is distributed by Cambridge/El Salvador Sister City

The Australian documentary *Cane Toads: An Unnatural History* delights with its perversity of style while it horrifies with its tale.

Project, 1151 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138.

Return to Aguacayo also recounts the journey of a U.S. religious delegation that accompanied Salvadoran refugees returning to an evacuated village. The 16-minute video (distributed by Educational Film and Video Project, 1529 Josephine St., Berkeley, CA 94703) travels with the villagers, who had asked for international observers for safety, until the army stops them and the foreigners are deported. We learn that the refugees did finally manage to return. Director Celeste Greco, a first-timer who worked with rudimentary equipment, competently transmits both the tension of the moment and the passion of the refugees to go home.

Haiti Dreams of Democracy, by peripatetic populist Jonathan Demme (*Melvin and Howard*, *Something Wild*, *Married to the Mob*) in early 1987 for Britain's Channel 4, only gets more timely as Haiti's political turmoil goes on. Through street theater and street scenes, homegrown music videos and visits to a voodoo priest (and voodoo celebrations), Demme documents the Haitian people's seemingly unquenchable desire for freedom, along with the Haitian elite's chronic corruption and power lust. You won't find deep-structure reasons for Haiti's abysmal poverty and political miasma, and there are only light references to its international context. But given the breadth of ignorance and misconceptions about the island and its

traditions, it's enough that the 52-minute video (distributed by Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, #802, New York, NY 10019) introduces you to unzombified Haitians who want what ordinary people anywhere want—clothes for their kids, schools—and who express those desires in popular and vigorous art.

Environment: *Cane Toads: An Unnatural History* delights with the perversity of its style while it horrifies with its tale. The award-winning 46-minute Australian documentary, made by Mark Lewis, captures the bizarre aspect of daily life in a fashion reminiscent of Errol Morris (*Gates of Heaven*, *The Thin Blue Line*). *Cane Toads* (distributed by First Run/Icarus Films, 200 Park Ave. South, #1319, New York, NY 10003) echoes horror films more than it does the National Geographic-style documentary and shocks with its confrontation with what local Australians regard as mundane. The huge cane toads were originally imported in an unsuccessful attempt to control a sugar cane pest. The toads not only have no natural enemies, but they kill other creatures with their venom. The ecological implications of the toads' subsequent population explosion are grim. But that's only part of the story. Its deeper subject is the range of reaction to the cane toad. Expert commentary is the least of Lewis' interview material. How about the little girls who make them pets, and the people who boil them up for drug highs? What becomes clear in Lewis' toads'-eye perspective is less the grotesque features of the cane toads—which are pretty grotesque from a human standard of beauty and function—than the inadequacy of social systems to control the consequences

of decisions made for narrow economic reasons.

Apartheid: *Soweto to Berkeley* (Cinema Guild, 1697 Broadway, #802, New York, NY 10019) in 50 minutes provides a vivid if roughly produced inside account of the campaign for divestment of South African-related stocks at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1985-86. The style is straightforward and unglamorous, often using taped-off-the-air news footage in combination with interviews. Director Richard C. Bock has produced a thoughtful exploration of the movement (which took place on other campuses as well at the time). It resulted in a regents' decision for divestment—without, as the titles remind us, any action on that decision. The drama that this video highlights is not between administrators and students, but between white students and those of color. Students of color initially argued against a consensus process and for a representative one; later, they argued against a confrontational strategy that they saw as provoking violence without political results. The major victory, as described in this video, was an emerging dialogue among students of different races on campus.

The economy: *War, Taxes and the Almighty Dollar* packs a lot into its half-hour essay on the high cost of an unaccountable defense budget. Director Joe Gray Jr. argues, through the voices of economists, Pentagon whistleblower Ernest Fitzgerald, a farmer, a steelworker, a tax resister and others, that our tax dollars are bloating an already corruption-sodden defense industry. Those dollars don't contribute to genuine defense, but they do contribute to the deficit, inflation and a sinking living standard. The results are there in the living rooms of the Rustbowl unemployed, the auction sites of bankrupt farms and the collapsing promises of local governments. Perhaps the most interesting moments of the video are in a Kentucky county meeting, where citizens bitterly argue over the need to raise local taxes in the face of declining federal revenues. The moment shows that Americans have not lost the will to participate in government, but they have lost power over the controlling features of it. The video tells plenty but avoids a narrator's lecture. Its experts' testimonies are vividly illustrated and also placed in context. Distributed by Appalshop, 306 Madison St., Whitesburg, KY 41858.

Also noted: *Good Work. Sister!* (Northwest Women's History Project, P.O. Box 5692, Portland, OR 97228), a 20-minute slide-tape transfer, uses oral histories of Northwest women who worked in World War II industry and includes a study guide. Low-tech and unsurprising after *Rosie the Riveter*, but with a regional angle. ■

By Jeff Salamon

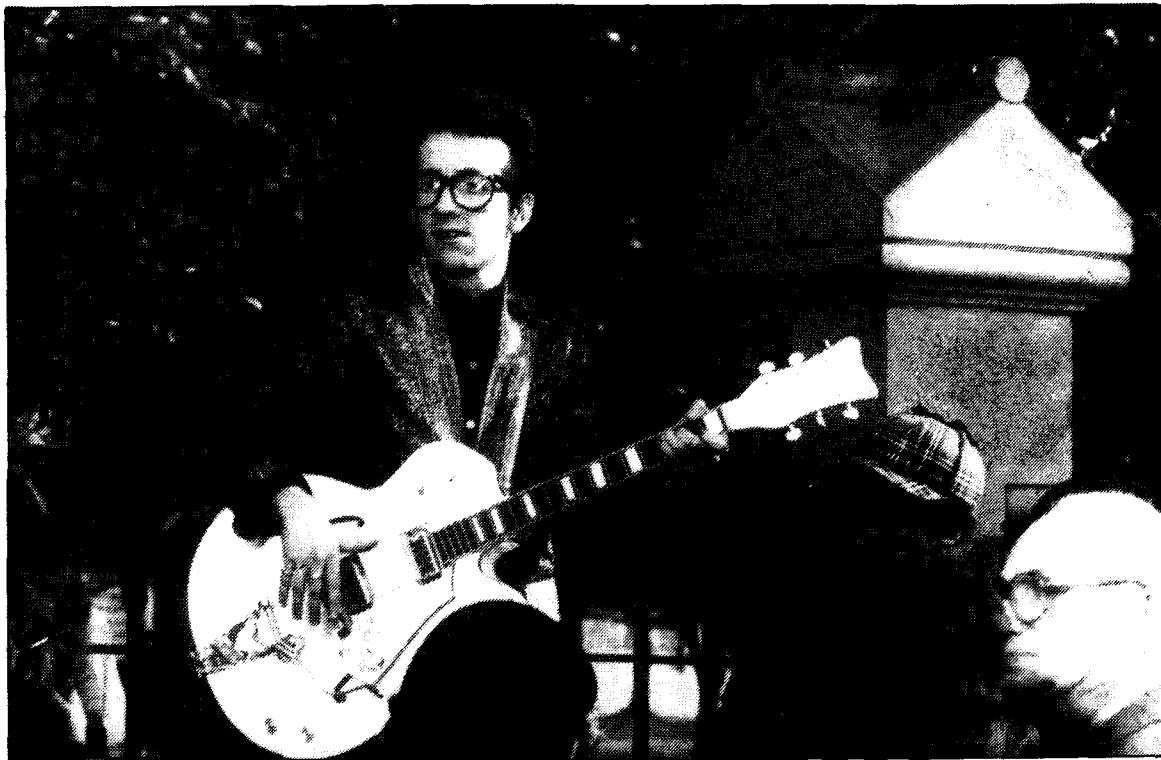
LOU REED CAME TO NEW YORK last month, commanded a Broadway stage and played the song "Rock and Roll" for the umpteenth time. The rendition was passable—springy, lively, the audience was up and dancing—but for a song about somebody whose life was saved by music, there was little at stake.

Odd, but not surprising. Safe at last in his middle years, Reed is struggling to defy Neil Young's famous dictum about burning out or fading away. The solution Reed's most recent album offers—political commitment—is as noble as it is intermittently successful (see *In These Times*, Feb. 22). Not all of Reed's topical verses succeed, but on his best new songs (the Andy Warhol eulogy, the AIDS song), he's found a new muse: his own mortality.

At 34, Elvis Costello is 12 years Reed's junior, but on his new album, *Spike*, he's also got death on his mind. "God's Comic" features a weary deity who lies on a waterbed and greets the deceased with a half-hearted harangue about the state of popular culture. Sipping a cola while He spouts off about everything under the sun, He could be the inspiration for Reed's avuncular stage patter. In any case, the music—from the sprightly verses to the chorus' echo of a beer hall sing-along—is a far cry from the apocalyptic fury Costello embodied on his debut record's "Waiting for the End of the World."

Whither fury? Like Reed, Costello's in the midst of a mid-career crisis. Twelve years after his scabrous debut he still puts out more wit and bile than you'd ever need,

Elvis Costello's original spin



Still angry after all these years, Costello grasps the power of restraint.

but after a while his withering fury seems creepy. What, after all, is this supposedly happily married, artistically successful man so damn angry about? Rather than resolve

MUSIC

the contradiction of growing old and continuing to rock and roll, Costello simply is talented enough to have avoided it.

Spike faces this dilemma and comes up with the same answer as Reed: go left, young man. Costello's politics have always been what you'd call progressive, but his Old Testament sense of vengeance hinted at a separate agenda. The constant demonization of his enemies—fascist leader Oswald Mosley on "Less Than Zero," corporate Britain in "Night Rally," any number of women on any number of songs—has always been more an act of self-definition than social critique. For Costello, the political was personal—and in the worst possible way.

The first sign of a change was 1983's "Shipbuilding," about how war (the Falkland Islands was the inspiration) affects a small town in England. Pleased by the wartime boost to its economy, the town seems perplexed that people actually die in combat. Yet, ridiculing the small town's small minds, Costello sounded crushed by the way circumstances reduce people to this sort of blood-and-butter calculus.

1985's *King of America* featured moments of similar generosity, but amidst his typically opaque lyrics they seemed mere plays in the elaborate cat-and-mouse game Costello has played with his listeners for years. *Spike* opens with another evasive maneuver—the first verse of "...This Town..." disparages some cheesy singer who burdens his audience with his "topical verse." But that initial reserva-

tion aside, Costello wears his political sympathies on his sleeve.

"Let Him Dangle," the story of a wrongful execution, puts Dylan's similar "Hurricane" to shame. Elliptically written, sparsely arranged, it sidesteps the sort of grandstanding that passes for social commentary nowadays: there's nothing here but Costello's sense of wounded justice.

Righteous reserve: He also keeps himself out of the picture in "Any King's Shilling," an old soldier's plea that a young friend not follow in his footsteps. When Costello's voice quavers on the high notes, it's like he's fighting back the disgust that's become an involuntary reflex. The reserve is worth it; his tone of righteous fatalism could have been lifted from a Wilfred Owen poem.

"Tramp the Dirt Down," the album's centerpiece, is more explicit in its self-abnegation. Costello starts with a snapshot of Margaret Thatcher on the campaign trail (When she kisses a baby, he asks, "Can you imagine all that greed and avarice coming down on that child's lips?") and goes on to express a sincere hope that when she dies, he'll "stand on [her] grave and tramp the dirt down." Even for the vitriolic Costello this is a real shock—set as it is against a sedate Irish folk melody.

Apparently it scared Costello too. After settling down to a series of rips at Thatcher, the song ends with an ambiguous retraction. "I

Eclectic pop master Elvis Costello's new album *Spike* is a stab at establishing a sense of community.

hope you live long now," he tells Thatcher.

I pray the Lord your soul to keep

I think I'll be going before we fold our arms and start to weep

I never thought for a moment that human life could be so cheap

'Cos when they finally put you in the ground

They'll stand there laughing and tramp the dirt down.

The song's structure is perverse. It starts off with a malevolent impulse, justifies it for three minutes, and then turns against its own hate. Costello sounds genuinely weary of this anger that doesn't change things. He wonders how he's allowed himself to get so twisted up inside that his first political impulse is akin to assassination.

Where these songs tie their messages to concrete circumstances, "Last Boat Leaving" keeps its historical context open. A father, in the middle of the night, says farewell to his son for the last time. "Do you know what I've done?" he asks over and over, and we definitely don't. He could be lots of people—a laid-off Pittsburgh steelworker hoping to find a job in Alaska, an IRA terrorist who can no longer remain safely in his own country, or just a beleaguered teenage parent unprepared for the demands of family life.

Costello a new man: That's the final song on the album, and it strikes a faint echo of the last song on the latest Randy Newman album, *Land of Dreams*. Newman, another middle-aged misanthrope, closes with "I Just Want You to Hurt Like I Do," about a masochist who enjoys bringing his loved ones down with him. Unlike Costello's narrator, who sounds torn apart over leaving his son, Newman's delights in abandoning his.

Newman, like Costello, has always had problems relating to a mass audience. In "I Just Want You to Hurt"

he dreams of performing a few songs in front of the entire world and then telling the assembled how much pain he wants them to feel.

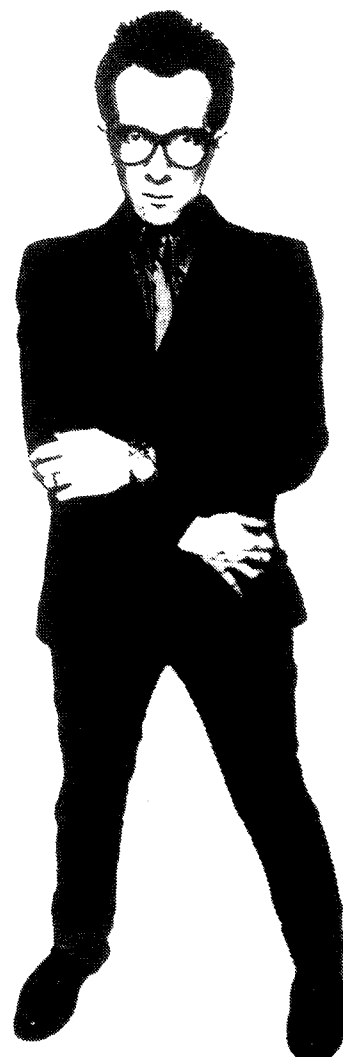
How strange—the only community he can imagine is based on mutual hostility. But then, Newman doesn't write songs to establish a common ground between him and his audience; he'd rather justify his own alienation. The songs work because he's talented enough to dig the same hole for the rest of his life and find art sticking to the end of his shovel every time.

Costello finds himself in a similar situation. Politics for him has long been not an opportunity for solidarity but an affirmation of his essential aloneness. And there are many who would be happy to see Costello do nothing but crank up that ol' perpetual anger machine once a year for the rest of his life.

Costello, fortunately, isn't one of them. *Spike* is a stab at establishing a sense of community, and its most moving song, "Satellite," shows how far he's willing to go to get it. "Satellite," like his earlier "Watching the Detectives," details the lives of people who find in mass media the intimacy they can't experience in real life. But where "Watching" was caustic, "Satellite" declines to judge. As someone who himself chooses to communicate through a commercial medium, Costello realizes that any finger he points will eventually be directed his way.

This is, indeed, a kinder, gentler Costello. But don't get the wrong idea, Elvis hasn't repented; he's just realized, as he once sang a long time ago, with very different meaning, that there's no such thing as original sin. ■

Jeff Salamon is an assistant editor at the *Village Voice*.



Brazil

Continued from page 24

aren't going to be overly impressed by my name. I'm sure the music found its own audience, mostly by word of mouth, I'd imagine. I produced an animated video of "Ponta de Lanca Africano" that's been shown on VH1 and a few of the cable stations, and I've done some interviews, but that's all I've done to promote it.

When you see a Brazilian artist live, the percussion really cooks, it's got an edge to it. On record the vocals are usually mixed way up front. Is there a reason for that?

Arto Lindsay tells me that Brazil, until recently, was mostly a preliterate, oral culture, so they place great importance on the way things are said or sung, not only the words themselves, but the tone of voice, too. Even in a love song there's a subtle wordplay going on, much of it idiomatic and hard to translate, but very sophisticated. And most singers consider themselves poets rather than songwriters; they put a lot of time and effort into the lyrics, so they want them to be heard.

There's also a lot of censorship going on. I just read that Chico Buarque had to submit the lyrics of his last record to the government censorship board, and when he got them back there were only three songs they'd let him sing.

Are you going ahead with the samba anthology you spoke about in the notes on *Beleze Tropical*?

Yeah. The selection is done, and we're working on clearing the rights for the tapes. At the moment it doesn't have any of the same artists on it. This is samba music from the

Rio area, most of it unavailable in this country. There are some tracks by Martinho da Vila, but he's probably the only name that you'll be able to find in North American record shops.

How about American gigs for Brazilian artists? Will any of these people open for the next Talking Heads tour?

We'll see what happens. Caetano Veloso just recorded an album, with Arto and Peter from the Ambitious Lovers producing, and I'm working on a record myself, so we'll have to wait and see.

A solo album?

Well, I'm not going into the studio and playing all the parts on a synthesizer, but it's my project. I'm working mostly with Latin musi-

cians in New York, although I have recorded little bits of it elsewhere. It's a mixture of new songs and some things that didn't fit on the last Talking Heads album.

I'm not sure when the next Talking Heads album will be put together or what form it will take. Chris [Frantz] and Tina [Weymouth] are in town rehearsing for some Tom Tom Club dates, and Jerry [Harrison] is finishing up his next record, so we're all pretty busy, although not as a band.

How about other kinds of world music? Any plans to expose people to more obscure sounds?

I'm not sure yet, but there's plenty of interesting music that people don't hear in North America. I like some of the rai [Alge-

rian pop] that's going over big in Paris. And there's the Cumbias from Colombia. It's got a great groove, very commercial, not folkloric at all. There's also a form called ghazal; it's a sung poetry from India and Pakistan. Some of the records I've heard have a nice garage-band quality, with backup that ranges from harmonium to autoharp to electric guitar and big swirling violin sections. There's also an Arabic pop artist called Farid Alatrash. The rhythms on his records are played by a string section, and they get an amazing groove going. It's very dramatic. It would be nice to get the rights to some of that stuff.

J. Poet, a critic living in Berkeley, Calif., is a frequent contributor to *In These Times*.

Buy, buy Brazil and more: picks from Dave's World Beat record collection

Beleze Tropical, Various Artists (Sire). The Gospel According to Brazil, featuring work by superstars like Caetano Veloso, Milton Nascimento, Jorge Ben, Gilberto Gil and the ever popular Others. The percussive Afro-Brazilian energy that drives these tracks will be a revelation to anyone who thinks that Brazilian music belongs in the Easy Listening/New Age bin. Check the Afro-rock of Jorge Ben's "Umbabarauma," the Latin samba of Chico Buarque's "Caçada," Gilberto Gil's "Quilombo, o el Dorado Negro" or the gently swinging Brazilian funk of Nazare Pereira's "Caixa de Sol." No matter where you drop the needle or set the program (the CD has four extra tracks), you're gonna hear some mind-blowing sounds. The package includes a discography to guide further exploration and helpful notes on the artists by Arto Lindsay.

Brazil Is Back, Various Artists (Celluloid). This compilation is more diffuse than Byrne's, with a harder, almost rock'n'roll edge to some of the tracks. Standouts include Gilberto Gil's rugged samba treatment of "Soy Loco Por Ti America"; "Vida" by Obina Shok, a band that mixes juju, samba, rock reggae and soca; and "Radio Blah" by Labão, Brazil's reigning hard rock/heavy metal star.

Batuqueiro, Martinho da Vila (Celluloid). Da Vila is a major figure in the rebirth of interest in the samba, an artist whose albums usually go gold or platinum. *Batuqueiro* is very African-sounding, with a great mix on the percussion.

Sound d'Afrique, Various Artists (Mango). One of the first—and finest—collections of African music to hit the racks in the '80s. This collection concentrates on soukous, the guitar band rhumba that's so popular in Zaire, the Congo and most of West Africa. At times there's a Latin feel to the rhythms, but the guitar-playing is pure African and swinging. Both available on CD in mid-May.

Assalam Aleikoum Africa (Volume 1 and 2), Various Artists (Antilles/Island). The first African collection on a major label, released in 1976. "Highlife" music recorded in Ivory Coast, but there's plenty of R&B, jazz, soul and rock'n'roll in the mix.

Black President, Fela Anikulapo Kuti (Capitol Midline). Nigerian Fela Kuti is one of West Africa's biggest stars. He's internationally famous for his opposition to the Nigerian ruling class, and his songs often earn him lengthy prison stays. *Black President* is one of his strongest LPs, a mix of Calypso-like political songwriting, James Brown-influenced funk and driving, traditional drum patterns. Long available only as an import, Capitol recently re-released this '81 session on its budget Midline imprint.

Return of the Juju King, Sunny Adé (Mercury); **Live Juju Live**, Sunny Adé (Rykodisc).

Island tried, and failed, to market Adé's juju music. With five lead guitars, pedal steel, talking drums, traps, congas, bongos, two bass guitars and a handful of singers, you might expect the music to be too busy for North American ears, but after the hypnotic juju groove takes effect, you notice how much space there is in the arrangements.

You Are Mine, Cheba Fadela (Mango). Rai ("wry") is an Algerian brand of pop that will force you to redefine your preconceptions of African music. *You Are Mine* is the product of a collaboration between Rachid Baba Ahmed, a multi-instrumentalist-producer record mogul who may be the Phil Spector of rai, and Fadela, rai's top female star. Since rai is a highly improvisational form, Ahmed records Fadela's vocals first, using a click track to keep the time. Later on, he adds beatbox technology, funk rock backbeats and bluesy Arabic guitar figures to the basic track, with startling results. Even with no

background in Arabic music, you'll find these tunes hard to get out of your head. "Ha-Liya-Ouana-Alch" (Why Does This Happen to Me?) sounds like the Castaways' "Liar Liar" taken to the casbah, "Ateni Bniti" (Give Me Back My Daughter) is funky enough to mix with any dance club track, and "N'sel Fik," a duet with rai superstar (and husband) Cheb Sahraoui, is considered the rai national anthem.

Rai Rebels, Various Artists (Earth Works Virgin). A collection of rai artists singing their biggest hits, with liner notes that will fill you in on rai.

Qareeb, Najma (Shanachie). Recorded in London with British pop producers, this introduces most Western ears to Ghazal, a traditional music from India with Persian roots. By increasing the tempo and adding modern technology, Najma has produced an Indian pop hybrid that swings in the Western sense while retaining its traditional sound.

-J.P.

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CHICAGO April 14-May 20

"Hold the Line," a new play by Christine Sumption, opens April 14 and runs through May 20. Centers on McCarthy period and Cold War. For tickets and information, call (312) 769-5199. Zebra Crossing Theatre, 4520 N. Beacon. Tickets \$10.

May 6

The 31st Annual Thomas-Debs Dinner honors William Winpisinger, President of IAM, Vice-Chair of DSA; and Milt and Sue Cohen, longtime Chicago activists; with Dr. Quentin Young as featured speaker. At the Midland Hotel, 172 W. Adams: cocktails 6 p.m., dinner 7 p.m. Tickets: \$35 each or \$60 as patrons. Make checks payable to Thomas-Debs Dinner Committee. Be sure your organization is represented in our program book! Contact Chicago DSA, 1608 N. Milwaukee, Room 403, Chicago, IL 60647, (312) 384-0327 for details.

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MONDAY, MAY 1—U.S. Labor and Latin America; Hobart Spalding, Sean Sweeny, Hank Frundt; 6 p.m.
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THURSDAY, MAY 4—Speciesism & Human Liberation, George Cave, 8 p.m.
SATURDAY, MAY 6—Improvisation and Politics, \$6, 8 p.m.

Events take place at the Brecht Forum, 79 Leonard St. (five blocks below Canal, between Church and Broadway). Unless otherwise listed, admission is \$5. For information call (212) 941-0332.

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LIFE IN HELL

LIFE IN HELL

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AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PUBLIC

Hi there.
On March 24, in the wee morning hours, mistakes were made in the waters of Prince William Sound, way up someplace in Alaska. By now you all know that our tanker, the Hexxon Valdez, was hit by a treacherous submerged reef that made us lose 240,000 barrels of valuable oil into the uncooperative waters of the Sound. We could sue that reef if we wanted to, but that's just not Hexxon's style. Instead, we are keeping our fingers crossed that this whole thing will blow over in a matter of weeks. Sure, there will be disgusting pictures of filthy birds, fish, and other unsavory wildlife. But I hope that you know Hexxon has already committed several hundred people to hose off those stubborn otters that still happen to be alive. Finally, and most importantly, I want you to believe how sorry I am that this incident occurred. We cannot, of course, undo what has been done. Only God can do that, and He caused the whole damn thing in the first place. But I can assure you that since March 24, this little "ink-in-the-drink" problem has been receiving our full attention, and will continue to do so until you forget about the whole thing. Thanks for your continued support. We couldn't do it to you without you.

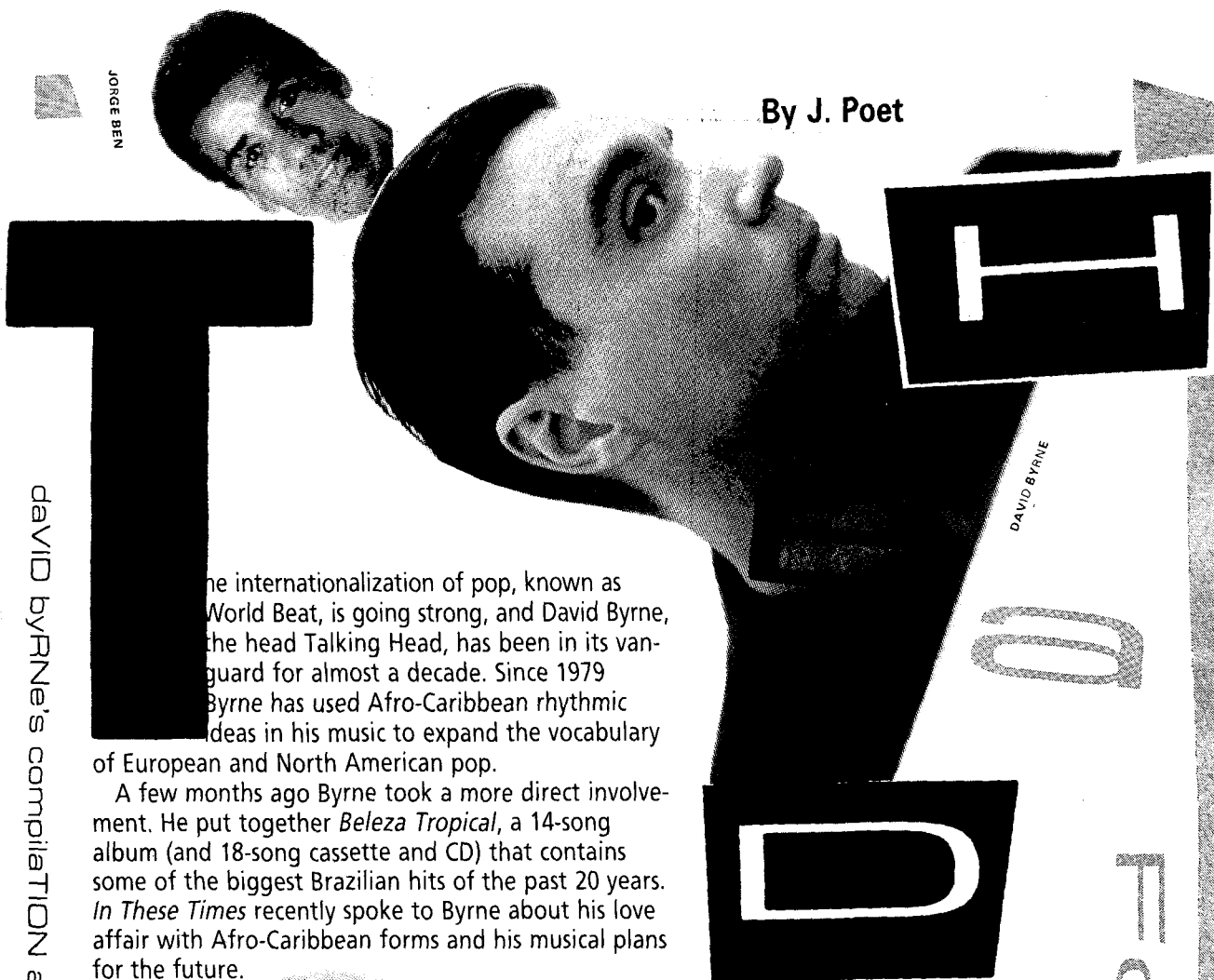
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P.S. To those who have suggested that we and scrub those oily rocks ourselves, not returning until the job is done, no matter how long it takes, we say simply this: You don't understand. We are rich and powerful beyond your wildest dreams.

HEXXON

By J. Poet

DAVID BYRNE'S COMPILATION album OPENS some EARS and REOPENS the U.S. DOOR to Brazilian music.



JORGE BEN

DAVID BYRNE

GAL COSTA



Let's backtrack and start with African music. You've listened to enough of it to incorporate it into your songwriting. How did you discover it?

In '78 I picked up a few African albums. When we were working on the *Fear of Music* album, there was a song called "I Zimbra," and one of the rhythms on one of the records fit it perfectly, so I took it from there. There weren't any guides at the time, so it was pretty hit-or-miss. I'd known of Fela and Sunny Adé, of course, but just as often I'd find something great by someone I'd never heard of.

Did African music catch your ear right off?

I had those Island Records' compilations with the guy playing guitar in front of a grass hut [*Assalam Aleikoum Africa*]. The title song by Francis Kingsley was pretty nice, but at the time I didn't get too excited. Like the Brazilian stuff, I needed to listen to more of it before I enjoyed it, although it might have been a case of not hearing the right stuff. A lot of people today hear African music and seem to like it right off.



MARIA BETHÂNIA

Well, people like you and Peter Gabriel have been using African rhythmic ideas for almost 10 years now in pop, so maybe it doesn't sound as foreign as it once did. Was there one record or song you remember as being the pivotal point?

Yeah, I heard an album called *17 Mabone*. On the album cover there was a picture of a car with 17 headlights on it. There wasn't any information on the record jacket, but I think it was from South Africa or Lesotho. It was mostly instrumental, and it started off with cars revving their engines and people chanting and screaming about the Indy 500 or something. It sounded like some kind of bizarre culture clash. There was violin and sax and the kind of South African drum patterns that we're more familiar with today. It was typical of the kind of musical hybrids that I find interesting. People from one culture assimilating something and using it to create something that's brand new. When you hear music that's almost familiar but played in a new way, it's very exciting.

In the notes you wrote for *Beleza Tropical* you said that you "didn't get" Brazilian music at first. In retrospect, do you know what it was that you weren't hearing?

I guess I wasn't in the right frame of mind to enjoy it. The first things I heard could even be the same music that's on [*Beleza Tropical*], but at the time the lightness of the rhythm and the groove sounded too mellow. This is the late '70s I'm talking about, and I was



CAETANO VELOSO

a young guy living in New York City and I didn't want to hear anything mellow. At that time it was almost evil to be mellow, or even to use the word "mellow." Also, the surface of the music was very polished, but later I was able to get beyond that to the interesting grooves that are going on below the vocals.

Then in '86 I was out in San Francisco doing the mix-down for the *True Stories* soundtrack. I picked up a couple of albums in a used record store, one by Caetano Veloso and one by Nazare Pereira, and I guess I was ready for it. I got really enthusiastic about it, and I realized that if these records were that good, there must be more great stuff out there. I went to Paris that year too. Paris is a great city for used records, and I got whatever I could find by Brazilian artists, again on a hit-or-miss basis.

Why did you do a compilation? Was it more work than you'd bargained for?

Every time I played these records for anyone, they wanted me to make them tapes. When I started making cassette collections for my friends, I realized there wasn't a single compilation that ran to my taste. None of [the Brazilian anthologies] satisfied me the way some of the African compilations like *Sound d'Afrique* did. So I decided to take the plunge. And since I was coming at this from an outsider's perspective, I wanted to make sure the songs I chose were to a North American's taste.

Most of these artists have anthologies out in Brazil, but their hits aren't necessarily going to go down with the American public. Gilberto Gil, for example, has been a major force in bringing reggae to the Brazilian audience. His reggae songs were very revolutionary down there, but to someone who grew up listening to Bob Marley, hearing reggae sung in Portuguese isn't that interesting. I mainly picked things I liked, 'cause I have no way of knowing what the "marketplace" might like. After the preliminary selection was done, I called Arto Lindsay [leader of the Ambitious Lovers], who grew up with this music. I asked him to go over the selections to see if there were any glaring omissions.

The majority of the work was writing letters to record companies, trying to clear copyrights and track down master tapes. I didn't realize there would be so much paper and phone work to do, although all of the record companies were very helpful. And they didn't realize it was going to sell as well as it did, so they certainly didn't do it for the money. All in all, I had remarkable luck. I was able to use every song I wanted to have on the album.

What was the reasoning behind the selections?

I tried to pick songs that were uniquely Brazilian. And I limited myself to the generation of pop singer/songwriters that came of age in the late '60s, some of whom are already known here. Or at least their names are known. It would have been ridiculous to try to put everything onto one disc. Imagine putting together a single record with the best music from this country. You could get stuck with one country song, one R&B, one rock'n'roll. It would be too big to get a handle on unless you limited yourself.

How about the actual work of putting the songs on tape?

The companies sent me digital copies of their master tapes. I put the record together in London while I was doing the music for *The Last Emperor*. There's no remixing or sweetening, they're basically the versions of the songs that were hits in Brazil. At one point I played with the idea of doing a dance mix of one of the tunes, but I let it go. Besides, I realized that no matter what I did, the record wasn't going to appeal to everybody, so I just put it out the way the artists originally intended.

Having your name on it didn't hurt its commercial fate, did it?

My name only helps up to a point. It gets [the record] out onto the street, but the people who will hear and like this music

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